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# HISTORY OF EUROPE

FROM THE

## FALL OF NAPOLEON

IN MDCCCXV

TO THE

## ACCESSION OF LOUIS NAPOLEON

IN MDCCCLII

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BY

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# HISTORY OF EUROPE.

## CHAPTER XX.

### IRELAND FROM 1822 TO THE MONETARY CRISIS OF DECEMBER 1825.



1822.

1. Mr O'Connell's account of the Irish peasantry.

WHILE Great Britain, in these alternate phases of feverish prosperity and lasting depression, was undergoing the usual fate of a commercial country in which the currency is made to rise or fall with the influx or disappearance of the precious metals, there existed, within a few hours' sail of its shores, an island, of which the following account was, at the same time, given by no common man, and no inexperienced observer: "The state of the lower orders in Ireland," said Mr O'Connell, "is such, that it is astonishing to me how they preserve health, and, above all, how they retain cheerfulness, under the total privation of anything like comfort, and the existence of a state of things that the inferior animals would scarcely endure; and which they do not endure in this country. Their houses are not even called houses, and they ought not to be; they are called cabins: they are built of mud, and covered partly with thatch, and partly with a surface which they call scraws, but which is utterly insufficient to keep out the rain. In these abodes there is nothing that can be called furniture; it is a luxury to have a box to put anything into; it is a luxury to have

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what they call a dresser for laying a plate upon: they generally have little beyond a cast-metal pot, a milk tub, which they call a keeler, over which they put a wicker basket, in order to throw the potatoes, water and all, into the basket, that the water should run into this keeler. The entire family sleep in the same apartment,—they call it a room; there is some division between it and the part where the fire is. They have seldom any bedsteads; and as to covering for their beds, they have nothing but straw, and very few blankets in the mountain districts. In general, they sleep in their clothes; there is not one in ten who has a blanket. Their diet is equally wretched. It consists, except on the sea-coast, of potatoes and water during the greater part of the year, and of potatoes and sour milk during the remainder: they use some salt with their potatoes, when they have nothing but water. On the sea-coast they get fish; the children repair to the shore, and the women and they get various kinds of fish. The ordinary rate of wages is fourpence a-day; and during the distress of 1822, the peasantry were glad to work for twopence a-day. Yet, even at this low rate of wages, there is no possibility of finding constant employment for the population. The consequence is, that every man cultivates potatoes, which is the food of his own family, and thus land becomes *absolutely necessary* for every Irish peasant. He cultivates that food, and he makes the rent, in general, by feeding the pig, as well as his own family, upon the same food, and, if it be not wrong to call it so, at the same table, upon the same spot. By that pig he makes his rent, besides any chance that he gets of daily labour."[1]

[1] Mr O'Connell's Evidence, Lords' Report on Ireland, App. 74, 76.

2. Statistics of the condition of the Irish poor.

The greater part of the poor of Ireland, at this period, obtained their subsistence by begging; and to such an extent was this carried that the average expenditure of each family on the begging poor was estimated, by competent observers, at a penny a-day, which, for a million

of families, would amount to £1,500,000 a-year. Independent of an indefinite sum levied every year by emigrant poor from Ireland upon Great Britain, there was raised, for the support of the destitute at home, though there were no poor-rates, on residents alone, £2,250,000, being half the public revenue, double the tithes, a fourth of the land-rent. The poor-rate of England, at its highest amount of £7,500,000, was only an eighth of the public revenue, a seventh of the land-rent assessed to it, and a half of the whole tithes in the hands of the clergy and the lay impropriators. This extraordinary and anomalous condition of the Irish poor is readily accounted for when their social situation at this time is taken into consideration. "There is no means of employment," said Mr Nimmo, in 1823, "for an Irish peasant, nor any certainty that he has the means of existence for a single year, but by getting possession of a portion of land, on which he can plant potatoes. In consequence of the increase of population, which is not checked by the misery which prevails, the competition for land has attained to something like the competition for provisions in a besieged town, or in a ship that is out at sea; and as there is no check to the demands by those who may possess the land, it has risen to a height far above its real value, or beyond what it is possible to extract from it under the management of the unfortunate peasants by whom it is cultivated. Add to this, that the land is almost always let by the proprietor to a large tenant, or *middleman*, who sub-lets it often through several gradations of sub-tenants to the actual cultivator, and each of these may distrain the crop and stocking for any arrears of the extravagant rent charged on him—a privilege which, by making the peasants generally liable for others' debts, renders the growth of agricultural capital wholly impossible."[1]

[1] Mr Nimmo's Evidence, Lords' Report, 129, 131.

Under this system there existed no practical check on

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3. Ruinous effects of the power of the landlord.

the power of the landlord. Whenever he pleased, or was himself pressed, he could extract the last shilling out of the unhappy cultivators beyond what could be produced by the rude culture of the land. Thus the lower orders in Ireland could never at this period acquire anything like property; they were always in a state of beggary; and the landlord, or the middleman, who was the principal person in those cases, on the least reverse of prices, which disabled the actual cultivator from paying what he had previously promised, had it in his power to seize, and actually did seize, his cow, his bed, his potatoes, and everything he had in the world. Any considerable fall of prices was thus the signal of utter ruin to the great body of Irish cultivators, and thus—as the country was entirely agricultural—of the whole people. "I have known," said Mr Nimmo, "a cow sold for a few shillings; nobody would buy, and the driver bought it himself. In the town of Kilkee, in the county of Clare, when I was passing through it in the time of the distress in the year 1822, the people were in a group on the side of the pound, receiving meal in the way of charity; and at the same time the pound was full of cattle. Of course, the milk of these cattle would have been worth something if it could have been obtained, but no one could buy it."[1]

[1] Mr Nimmo's Evidence, Lords' Report, 132, 134.

4. Immense and redundant population in the country.

What aggravated to a most distressing degree the general misery, and rendered almost nugatory all attempts for its relief, was the prodigious and daily-increasing population which overspread the country. By the census of 1821, the inhabitants were 6,801,827; and so rapid was the rate of this increase, that in 1841 this number had increased to 8,196,597,[2] although emigration had, in the interim, drained off a considerable number, and at least half a million had in that interval settled in Great Britain, where their daily-increasing numbers had come seriously to affect the employment of the people, and was a great cause of the general distress. Artificial wants

[2] Porter, 3d edit., p. 9.

and prudence in the conduct of life, the great restraints on the principle of increase in well-regulated societies, had no influence on the Irish peasantry, who were almost always married before they were eighteen, and often grandfathers at thirty-four. This rapid growth of population operated in a pernicious manner on the condition of the people in two ways. In the first place, it lowered, by excessive competition, the wages of labour, which were everywhere brought down to the lowest point consistent with physical existence. In the next place, it proportionally raised, by the same competition, the rent of land. When a farmer, who had a few acres, had his children to portion out in the world, having never any money, what he invariably did was, to portion out his little piece of land among them. Thus every marriage was immediately followed by a splitting of farms, and a multiplication of indigent cultivators; and as their numbers soon became excessive, and the possession of land was the sole means of subsistence, the competition for these became so great as to raise the rents to an extravagant height, often far beyond what the land could by possibility pay. The peasant did not care what he bid, provided he got hold of the land; and the landlords, charmed with the prospect of six or seven guineas an acre for potato land which was not worth three, shut their eyes to the inevitable result of such a state of things upon the habits and social condition of the people.[1]

[1] Mr Blackburn's Evidence, Lords' Report, 154, 158; Newenham's Ireland, 58, 59; Young's Tour in Ireland, ii. 198; Wakefield's Ireland, ii. 776.

5. Munificent grants of the English to Ireland.

To assuage the misery of the country, the beneficence of England had flowed in mighty streams, both from the public treasury and from private sources, but without producing any sensible effect in its prevention. Independent of the munificent subscription of £350,000 already mentioned,[2] which was raised in a few weeks in Great Britain, and sent over to Ireland in the famine of spring 1823, the permanent grants of Government to the charities of Ireland were immense. In Dublin alone, the

[2] Ante, c. x. § 122.

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grants of the British Government in the year 1818 amounted to £171,000.* The police of the country, an admirable force, of the greatest use in preserving tranquillity, were supported almost entirely at the expense of Great Britain; no less than £530,000 a-year for their maintenance was paid by the Consolidated Fund of England, and only £29,000 by the counties and towns of Ireland. Scotland never got one farthing for this purpose; its whole police is assessed on its own inhabitants. Add to this that Ireland never, before 1852, paid any property or income tax; and that the assessed taxes, such as they were, were repealed in 1823, and have never since been reimposed. Ireland, prior to 1838, never paid poor-rates, in consequence of which its poor swarmed over, and were thrown as a burden on the inhabitants of Great Britain. Above a million of these unwelcome visitors settled in England and Scotland in the first half of the nineteenth century; and more than one parliamentary committee have reported, that but for them there would never have been any serious distress among the labouring poor of Great Britain.

6. Great simultaneous increase of industry and productions in Ireland.

While these unequivocal symptoms of public suffering were prevailing in Ireland, the statistical returns of exports and imports exhibited a very great and most gratifying increase; and the Secretary for Ireland, when twitted with the general distress, was always able to meet the complaints with a formidable array of figures, which seemed to indicate the very highest state of industrial

* Viz.—

| | |
|---|---|
| Protestant Charter School, | £38,331 |
| Foundling Hospital, | 32,515 |
| House of Industry, | 36,610 |
| Richmond Lunatic Asylum, | 7,085 |
| Fever Hospital, | 12,000 |
| Dublin Police, | 26,500 |
| Lock Hospital, | 3,307 |
| Dublin Society, | 9,231 |
| Society for Education, | 5,523 |
| | £171,101 |

—*Parl. Rep.*, March 18, 1819.

prosperity. The exports and imports of the island had doubled since the beginning of the century; the latter had now come to exceed £8,000,000 sterling.* By far the greater part of this was agricultural, and five-sixths of the whole was sent to Great Britain. This great increase in the ascertained productions of industry, when co-existing with an equally established spread of misery and wretchedness, is a rare combination; but it is by no means impossible, and several examples of it have occurred in later times. The returns of exports and imports exhibit a fair measure of a considerable part of the production and consumption of the country; but they tell nothing of the *proportion* in which they are divided among the inhabitants. When it is very unequal, a great increase of productive labour may take place, and some classes may be enriched, and add to their consumption of foreign luxuries, while the bulk of the people are daily sinking deeper into the abyss of wretchedness.

7. Causes of the wretched situation of Ireland.

Many causes, doubtless, have conspired to produce these results, but the principal appear to be the following:—The first place must, without doubt, be assigned to the character of the great bulk of the population. Brave, ardent, and generous, highly gifted in genius, and with many estimable and amiable qualities in private

* Exports and Imports from Ireland in under-mentioned Years:—

| Years. | Imports. | Exports. | Of which Exports to Great Britain. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1793 | £4,164,985 | £5,125,934 | £4,039,581 |
| 1800 | 4,657,784 | 4,350,640 | 3,778,520 |
| 1810 | 7,055,214 | 5,928,113 | 5,159,884 |
| 1814 | 8,170,820 | 7,088,756 | 5,731,119 |
| 1817 | 5,644,175 | 6,412,892 | 5,569,463 |
| 1818 | 6,098,720 | 6,436,950 | 5,942,351 |
| 1819 | 6,395,972 | 5,708,582 | 5,123,457 |
| 1820 | 6,278,478 | 6,371,328 | 5,621,321 |
| 1821 | 6,407,427 | 7,703,857 | 7,067,252 |
| 1822 | 6,607,487 | 6,771,607 | 6,124,356 |
| 1823 | 6,020,975 | 8,091,113 | 7,674,129 |

—*Annual Register*, 1824, p. 262; M'Culloch's *Commercial Dictionary*, vol. ii. p. 9; and *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*, Sup. v., p. 106.

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life, the Celtic populations have none of the dispositions which qualify them either for attaining temporal superiority in life, or for constructing, without external direction, the fabric of general social happiness. Gay, volatile, and inconsiderate, the Irish enjoy the present without a thought of the future, and are incapable of the foresight or self-control which are essential to success in this world. Above all, they are entirely destitute of the power of self-direction and self-government, which is the foundation of the entire structure of a free constitution. Thence it is that, the greater the privileges which have been conceded to them, the more wretched has their condition become; until at length, when their political rights had been in all respects put on a level with those of the English, their destitution became so excessive that two millions of human beings disappeared in eight years, and the annual emigration came to exceed two hundred thousand a-year. In the next place, a prominent place must be assigned to the circumstance of the conquest of Ireland by the English, and the atrocious system of confiscation *which*, in conformity with the feudal usages, the victors introduced on occasion of every rebellion against their authority. Without doubt this conquest itself is to be traced to the instability of the Irish character; for why did they not keep out the English invaders, as the Scotch, with half their number and not a quarter of their material resources, effectually did?* But admitting this, as every candid mind must do, there can be no doubt that the conquest of the country, and consequent

* Scotland possesses in round numbers 5,000,000 arable acres and 12,000,000 of mountain wastes; Ireland, 12,000,000 of arable acres and 5,000,000 of mountain wastes: the former country, in 1825, had 2,300,000 souls, the latter above 7,000,000. Yet was Ireland conquered by Henry II. with 1000 men-at-arms and 2000 archers; while Scotland, though in the same island as England, and so accessible by a land force, without the intervention of that mighty barrier the sea, hurled 80,000 English soldiers with disgrace out of the realm.

confiscation of the estates, has been an evil of the very first magnitude to Ireland. Thence have flowed the bestowing of the forfeited estates on English nobles and companies, the middlemen who were to collect their rents and remit them to this country, and the fatal imposition of a host of persons between the owner of the soil and the actual cultivators, all of whom lived on their labour, and wrung the last shilling out of their earnings.

8. Effects of the Roman Catholic religion.

The third cause which has aggravated the miseries of Ireland, and hitherto rendered abortive all attempts to ameliorate the condition of its inhabitants, is the unfortunate circumstance of the Roman Catholic religion being that of the majority of the working classes, while the Protestant was that of nearly the whole of the persons upon whom the forfeited estates had been bestowed. It is an unhappy state of things in any country when the *landed* proprietors profess a different faith from their tenantry, when the weekly bond of union arising from meeting in the same place of worship and joining in the same prayers is awanting, and when that which should ever be the bond of peace becomes the source of bitterness. It became doubly so when the landowners were the persons who had dispossessed seven-eighths of the original proprietors, and the heirs of the attainted persons were working as day-labourers on the estates of their fathers. But in addition to all this there was a circumstance of peculiarly injurious tendency, that in Ireland the tithes belonged to one set of clergy and the peasantry adhered to another. The cultivators became exposed to a double set of exactions: they were compelled to uphold two separate ecclesiastical establishments, one of which enforced its rights by the arm of the temporal law, and the other by the still more formidable engine of spiritual power. And the clergy of the latter, having no source of income but what they could derive

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from the free gifts of their parishioners, which were chiefly composed of large fees on occasion of marriages, births, and burials, came in this way to have a decided interest in the augmentation of population, and were led to exert their great influence to further rather than restrain the tendency to increase among their flocks.

9. Splitting of farms for political purposes.

This tendency to increase, so strongly fostered among the peasantry, from interested motives, by the spiritual militia, was equally promoted by their temporal landlords. The Act of 1793, which extended the right of voting for members of Parliament to forty-shilling freeholders in Ireland as in England, was attended in the former country with the most disastrous results, and was another of the innumerable instances of the extreme danger of transplanting institutions from one country to another when the circumstances of the two are not exactly parallel. The Irish landlords, sharing for the most part to the very full in the indolent and *insouciant* character of the Celts, had no resource for the establishment of their sons in life but in Government employment, and experience soon taught them that for the acquisition of this nothing was to be relied on but political influence. To secure this, they favoured to the utmost of their power the multiplication of liferent possessions, which constituted freeholds, and the division of farms, to which the peasantry, from their general want of capital, were already so much inclined. Thus everything conspired to augment the tendency to increase, to which, from the absence of artificial wants, the people were already so prone; for the priests encouraged it from a desire to multiply marriages lucrative to them, and the landlords to secure influence in the Castle of Dublin for needy and idle sons. To such a length did these causes operate, that by a parliamentary survey, taken in 1846, it appeared there were no less than 1,016,338 separate landed possessions in Ireland,[1] of which one-half were below the value of £4,

[1] Parl. Papers, April 7, 1850.

held by nearly an equal number of squalid and destitute cultivators.*

10. Pernicious effects of the potato.

In these peculiar and extraordinary circumstances, the introduction of the POTATO, which has in general proved so great a blessing to the working classes, became the greatest curse, for it furnished subsistence for a vast increase of destitute cultivators, while it led them to trust entirely for that subsistence to the most precarious of all crops. Three times the number of persons can be fed on an acre of potatoes, who can be maintained on an acre of wheat in ordinary seasons; but, on the other hand, the potato crop is liable to occasional failure, or rather total ruin, to a degree unknown in any cereal crop. It is hard to say which peculiarity of this valuable root, which has now come to form so large a portion of the food of the working classes in all countries, and in Ireland composed the whole, was attended, in the circumstances of that island, with most peril to the community; for the first afforded almost boundless room for multiplication to a squalid peasantry, who were content to live on potatoes alone; while the last exposed them to the risk of famine, whenever any of the periodical seasons of failure of that crop came round. This was what happened with the potato crop of 1822, and occasioned the dreadful distress of that year, which was relieved only by the magnificent exertion of British charity; and the same disaster recurred on a still greater scale, and with circumstances of unexampled horror, in the famine of 1846. Potatoes form a most valuable *addition* to the food of the people, when the staple of their consumption is of other things; when

* These little freeholds were thus composed in 1846, before the famine:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Under £4, . . . . . | 500,387 |
| From £4 to £5, . . . . . | 79,614 |
| From £5 to £6, . . . . . | 63,113 |
| From £6 to £7, . . . . . | 41,113 |
| Above £8, . . . . . | 332,111 |
| | 1,016,338 |

—*Parliamentary Paper*, April 7, 1850.

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they become their sole, or even chief subsistence, it may with safety be concluded that the social system is in a diseased state, and that unbounded calamities are at hand.

11. Want of poor-laws.

Last, though not least, in the catalogue of Irish grievances at this period, must be placed the entire absence of any legal provision for the poor. The island at this period was overrun by above two millions of beggars, being nearly a fourth of the entire population; and yet there was no provision either for their succour in sickness or old age, or their employment in health, or their emigration from the country. Their only resource was to get possession of bits of land, of two or three acres each, which they planted with potatoes, and in the interval between the planting and raising of that crop they were in total idleness, or picked up for a few weeks a precarious employment by working on the public roads, or migrating for a season to reap the harvests of Great Britain. It is true, a considerable sum, amounting to above £600,000 a-year, was levied by the grand juries, under *legal authority*, for county rates; but that sum was chiefly expended on roads and bridges, which were the only things in the country which were in general in an admirable state, and the work on which, of course, could only be done by the able-bodied. To the old, the infirm, the sick, the orphans, the desolate children, these afforded no sort of relief. *They* fell as a burden almost entirely on the peasantry, whose pittance was, in a truly Christian spirit, always open to them, and the sums levied annually by the *poor on the poor* was computed, as already stated, at £1,500,000 a-year. The effect of this state of things, prejudicial in every way, was in an especial manner so in the matter of population. By keeping so large a portion of the inhabitants in a state of constant destitution, the sight of poverty in its most extreme form was constantly before the eyes of the people; and then, like death to soldiers in a bloody campaign, it lost all its terrors, and

the principle of increase became unlimited in its operations. Experience has abundantly proved that of all epidemic disorders there is none so contagious *as the recklessness produced by extreme poverty*, and that no remedy can be relied on for its prevention but the removal of the destitute into situations where their immediate necessities are supplied, and the demoralising effect of their example is taken away. As a great duty of the affluent is to relieve the indigent, so this duty can never be neglected without its punishment speedily falling on the heads of the parties in fault; and never did this retribution descend more swiftly and heavily than in the case of the Irish landholders.

12. Absentee proprietors.

In the first instance, however, the effect of this flood of extreme poverty, which overspread the land, appeared in a form which aggravated in a most serious degree the distresses of the country. Unable to endure the sight of a mass of poverty, which they could neither relieve nor prevent, a large portion of the landed proprietors—nearly the whole who could afford to do so—left the country, spent their incomes in London, Paris, or Italy, lost in consequence all interest in their estates, and were known to their tenantry only by the periodical and unwelcome visits of their bailiffs to collect the rents. Thence arose an entire estrangement between the peasantry and their natural protectors, and a ceaseless state of hostility between the landlords and the cultivators of their lands. The former, eager to close such a state of things, and to introduce a better mode of culture and a more substantial body of tenantry on their estates, endeavoured in many instances to bring over Scotch or English farmers, possessed of some capital, to take their farms; but this attempt had for long very little success. The peasantry considered it as a prelude to ejecting them from their possessions, and throwing them to starve upon the highway. It was a struggle of life or death to them, and, animated alike by hatred at the Saxon and

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terror at being dispossessed, they engaged generally in secret societies, the object of which was to murder every new-comer, and every landlord or factor who was instrumental in introducing them.

13. Ribbonmen and secret societies.

Thence the association of RIBBONMEN, who were bound together by the most terrible oaths to work out this nefarious system, and who furnished the assassins, who were at all times ready for a trifling sum to execute the mandates of the lodges in fire-raising or murder. This is the real secret of the long continuance and general prevalence of agrarian outrages in Ireland, and explains the fact, so different from what is experienced elsewhere, that the counties were more disturbed than the towns, and that crime was nowhere so prevalent as in the purely agricultural districts. Philosophy came to the aid of party politics in the consideration of this question, and the extraordinary doctrine was broached, and seriously maintained by eminent men, and in celebrated journals, that the absentee proprietors were no evil to Ireland, because the demand for labour, arising from the expenditure of the landed proprietors, was as great if the money was spent in London or Paris as on their own estates;—a paradox very convenient for those who wished to represent Catholic emancipation as the sovereign remedy for all the evils of the country, and about as true as if it were to be maintained that an excessive drought or famine in one country is no evil to its inhabitants, because, as the average moisture that falls on the produce which is raised from the *whole earth* is the same, or nearly so, in one year as another, the deficiency of one district will be compensated by the excess of another.

14. Orange Lodges.

Finding themselves in a small minority amidst a mass of hostile and almost insurgent Roman Catholics, the Protestants, in self-defence, organised themselves in an opposite association, which, under the name of ORANGE LODGES, had in like manner secret signs, obeyed unknown authority, and too often engaged in revengeful and bloody

deeds. These two opposite associations were soon involved in fierce and irreconcilable hostility with each other; and as nearly the whole peasantry of the country belonged to one or other of the associations, or at all events obeyed the mandates of their leaders, the entire inhabitants were, in some districts, arrayed under opposite banners, obeyed opposite commands, and were always ready for mutual hostility. Thus, in addition to all other causes of discord, the landholders and peasantry of Ireland became arrayed in opposite and nearly equally dangerous secret associations; for the chief proprietors were office-bearers in the Orange lodges, and the great body of the Catholics were members of the Ribbon lodges, or belonged to the Catholic Association, which came to play so important a part in the annals of that unhappy country.

15. Irregularity and uncertainty in the administration of justice.

For a people so situated, the first necessity, and greatest of all blessings, would have been a strict and even rigorous administration of justice—such an administration as, without being stained with unnecessary severity, should have taken away the chief temptation to crime, by removing its rewards, or rendering certain its punishment. Unfortunately, however, in this matter, the British connection, which it might naturally be supposed would have been attended with the most salutary effects, was, from the opposite character of the people in the two countries, followed by the most disastrous. The English, according to their usual and not unnatural custom, thought they could not do anything so good for Ireland as transplanting wholesale their own institutions into it; and the popular party in Ireland, seeing that all these institutions tended to augment the influence of the democratic leaders, warmly supported the same system. Thus they both concurred in doing what, in the circumstances of the country, was of all things the most ruinous to the cause of tranquillity and order, and the lasting interests of its inhabitants. They gave grand juries to a people so divided that no proceeding of the higher orders was ever set down

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to any motive but the very worst one by the lower; they insisted upon unanimity in petty juries when the inhabitants were so divided by passion and opinion, that it was scarcely possible to find twelve men of opposite creeds in it who could agree on any subject; they enfranchised the forty-shilling freeholders, and introduced popular elections among a peasantry so illiterate that they could vote only at the dictation of their landlords or their priests, and so tumultuous, when excited, that no votes opposed to their predilections could, during a contested election, be given in safety, but by voters escorted to the polling-place by dragoons, and protected there by military and police with fixed bayonets. Thence a constant state of excitement in the public mind, a disastrous uncertainty in the administration of justice, and a total disbelief on the part of the peasantry in the equity of its decisions. Everything came to depend on the criminal courts, or at least was thought to depend on the chance or official dexterity which had given a majority on the grand or petty jury to one or other party; and the courts of justice, when the awful scene of a trial for life or death was going on, were surrounded by an agitated crowd, who alternately followed with loud lamentations the cars which conveyed persons convicted, whom they believed to be innocent, to exile or the scaffold; or escorted with loud shouts assassins acquitted, whom they knew to be guilty, in a civic ovation to the homes which they had stained by their crimes.

16. Intimidation of juries and witnesses.

As a natural mode of defeating the punishment of crime in a country so convulsed, and cursed rather than blessed by the institutions suited to a different race or state of society, the intimidation of juries and witnesses was thoroughly organised, and carried to such a height as, in cases which interested the people, rendered a conviction, even when guilt was certain, always uncertain, often impossible. The most violent threats were liberally applied by markings on doors, anonymous letters, or other-

wise, to any one concerned in the conviction of the patriots who had hazarded their lives in the cause of religion and the people; and so frequently were these threats carried into execution that not only were the nerves of the jurymen often shaken, and verdicts contrary to the clearest evidence returned, but the important witnesses were so endangered that they could find safety only within the walls of a jail; and giving evidence on a trial was more certainly the prelude to removal, at the Government expense, to a distant land, than the commission of the greatest and most atrocious crime. Thence an amount of crime in proportion to the population, an impunity to offenders and uncertainty in the administration of justice, which strangely contrasted with the comparatively regular and steady march of crime, and its small amount in the neighbouring island.* And still more dreadful, the impunity for crime and the encouragement to its commission did not cease even with sentence of death and execution, for an applauding multitude attended the last footsteps of the murderer, and a fanatical priest promised him eternal rewards for his self-sacrifice in what they deemed his country's cause.

To a country labouring under so many and such vari-

* COMMITTED IN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND, FROM 1822 TO 1834.

| Years. | England. | Scotland. | Ireland. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1822 | 12,241 | 1691 | 15,251 |
| 1823 | 12,263 | 1733 | 14,632 |
| 1824 | 13,698 | 1802 | 15,258 |
| 1825 | 14,437 | 1876 | 16,318 |
| 1826 | 16,164 | 1999 | 18,031 |
| 1827 | 17,924 | 2116 | 14,683 |
| 1828 | 16,564 | 2024 | 15,271 |
| 1829 | 18,675 | 2063 | 15,794 |
| 1830 | 18,107 | 2329 | 15,234 |
| 1831 | 19,647 | 2431 | 16,192 |
| 1832 | 20,829 | 2431 | 16,056 |
| 1833 | 20,072 | 2564 | 17,819 |
| 1834 | 22,451 | 2711 | 21,381 |

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, 653, 667. The population of Ireland at this time was about 7,500,000; of Scotland, 2,500,000; and of England, 13,000,000—numbers which strangely contrast with the opposite proportions of crime.

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17. Catholic emancipation the only remedy proposed by English Liberals and Irish malcontents.

ous causes of evil, no one remedy, how powerful soever, could prove effectual; and it was only by slow degrees, and after a length of time, that the greatest combination of them could be expected to produce any sensible effect. As the source of them was mainly to be found in the habits of the people, so it was only in a change of those habits—of necessity the work of time—that the spring of improvement was to be found. Nothing could be expected to be effective but such causes as should relieve the mass of wretchedness which overspread the country, elevate the wages of labour, lessen the competition for land, and furnish the means of emigration to such as could not obtain a share of it. An expanded currency, which should raise the price of agricultural produce, the sole staple of the people; a prudent but yet liberal poor-law, which should compel the Irish landowners and *their mortgagees*, enjoying between them an income of £13,000,000 from the labour of the cultivators, to relieve the distress they had so large a share in creating; a vast system of emigration, conducted at the *public* expense, and drawing off the really destitute instead of those who had some capital, and could do well at home; and a strict and rigorous administration of justice, in a way beyond the reach of violence or intimidation, could alone be relied on to prove effectual. But nothing of this was thought of. Government firmly persevered in a monetary system which, by lowering the price of agricultural produce a half, destroyed the remuneration of rural industry; they resisted all attempts to introduce a poor-law into a country overflowing with indigence beyond any state in Europe; the House of Commons was counted out the moment any motion for emigration at the public expense was made; and the friends of Ireland, on both sides of the Channel, concentrated all their efforts on political agitation to attain Catholic emancipation—that is, open the doors of the House of Lords to a dozen highly respectable Catholic peers, and of the Commons to forty or fifty nominees of the Catholic priesthood.

They gained their object, as the succeeding chapter will testify: with what effect the succeeding volumes of this history will unfold. Without outstripping the march of events, it is sufficient to observe, what is known to all the world, that this step, however loudly called for by justice and equity, has utterly failed, on the admission of its warmest advocates, in removing one real grievance of Ireland, while it has introduced many to which the country had hitherto been a stranger. The agitation for Repeal of the Union succeeded that for Catholic Emancipation; monster meetings were held in every part of the island, to the distraction of the minds of the peasantry, and the annihilation of all feeling of security in the realm; corporate reform gave the priesthood the command of many boroughs, parliamentary reform and the Catholic Association of most counties; popular privileges were extended to the people in every direction, and popular influence became the ruling power in Dublin. The consequences of thus extending to a nation in pupilarity the privileges of manhood were soon apparent. Capital shunned the peopled and agitated shores of the Emerald Isle; emigration, meeting with no encouragement from Government, was suspended; the competition for land—the only means of existence—became greater than ever; fiendish outrages, the consequence of the dread of losing it, more frequent; the renewal of the Coercion Act a matter of necessity even to those who had most loudly condemned it; and at length Providence, seeing remedy by human means hopeless, interposed with decisive effect—a famine of the thirteenth fell upon the multitudes of the nineteenth century; two millions* of inhabitants disappeared from Ireland in five years between starvation and exile;

Effects of that measure

* Population of Ireland by census of 1841, . . 8,196,597
Increase to 1846, five years, at same rate as preceding decade, . . . . . 400,000

Population in 1846, . . 8,596,597
Actual population by census 1851, . . 6,553,357

Decrease in five years, 2,043,240

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and now the annual emigration of 250,000 cultivators at once attests the consequences of the commercial policy of England in recent times, and has designated in a manner not to be misunderstood the only remedy left for the sufferings of the sister kingdom.

19. Disturbed state of Ireland in 1823, and prosecutions for the riot in the Dublin theatre.

The extreme distress of the inhabitants of Ireland, through the years 1821 and 1822, in consequence of the contraction of the currency, and consequent depreciation in the price of agricultural, almost its only produce, to nearly a half of its former amount, continued throughout the whole of the succeeding year. The insult to the Lord-Lieutenant in the theatre of Dublin, on the 14th December 1822, which has been already noticed, led to prosecutions, first before the Grand Jury of that city, and then before the Court of King's Bench, on an *ex officio* information, both of which proved ineffectual; the natural, and, in that country, too frequent result of the requiring, according to English law, unanimity in juries, in a country where, from the unhappy division of parties, both on religious and political subjects, it is seldom, in cases of an exciting nature, to be expected. This abortive proceeding led only to mutual recriminations by the Attorney-General and Grand Jury of Dublin, which had no other effect but to augment the irritation between them, and inflame the general discontent. The consequence was, an inquiry by the House of Commons into the charges preferred by the Attorney-General against the Grand Jury, and by the opposite party against the High Sheriff of Dublin, for alleged partiality in the selection of names for the array.[1] The proceedings in Parlia-

[1] Ann. Reg. 1823, 49, 60.

EMIGRATION FROM BRITISH ISLES.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1844, | 70,686 | 1849, | 299,493 |
| 1845, | 93,501 | 1850, | 280,849 |
| 1846, | 129,851 | 1851, | 335,966 |
| 1847, | 258,270 | 1852, | 368,764 |
| 1848, | 248,089 | | |

—CHESNEY'S *Results of Census* 1851, p. 56.

ment led to no more satisfactory result than those in the courts of law; and both tended only to inflame the violence of party spirit in Ireland, and unfold the calamitous extent to which its excesses prevailed and the administration of justice was tampered with in that unhappy country.

20. Disturbed state of the country.

These judicial and parliamentary proceedings had the effect of renewing the party riots and agrarian disturbances which, in the beginning of the year, from the rise in the price of agricultural produce, had begun sensibly to diminish. The violence of religious and political animosity disturbed the tranquillity even of those districts where life and property had hitherto been most secure. The whole peasantry sided with one or other of the great parties which divided the State; most of them were members of Orange or Ribbon lodges, where mutual animosity was fostered, and implicit obedience to chiefs inculcated; and whenever they met in any considerable numbers, insults were exchanged, and not unfrequently wounds and death were the consequence. The power of the law was shattered against these vast associations, for they led to the intimidation of witnesses to such a degree that evidence could seldom be obtained; and if it was, the course of justice was not unfrequently stopped by a refractory juryman, who belonged to the same religious party as the accused, and positively refused to convict on the clearest proof. To such a length did the disturbances proceed, that murders, arsons, and burglaries were of daily occurrence; policemen were murdered on the public streets or roads; and the Grand Jury of the county of Cork presented a petition to the Lord-Lieutenant, in which they stated that, within the last six months, a hundred cases had come before them of houses burnt, cattle houghed, and the like, by armed bands, who compelled the unhappy owners to stand by and witness the destruction of their property. [1]

[1] A. 1825, c. 63.

In these disastrous circumstances, Government, on the application of the Lord-Lieutenant, proposed the renewal

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21. Renewal of the Insurrection Act, and composition for tithes.

of the Insurrection Act, which was so obviously called for by necessity that it met with very little opposition in Parliament, and passed, almost unnoticed, into a law. It never failed, for a time, to apply a rude but effective remedy to the disorders of the country, chiefly by withdrawing the cognisance of offences from juries, in whose hands justice was so effectually obstructed, and vesting it in the magistrates, by whom it was sternly but effectively applied. This, however, was only a palliative; it left the real sources of evil untouched. A step, however, was in the same season made in the right direction, by a bill introduced by Mr Goulburn, and which became law, for the legalising of compositions for tithes.[1] This act was only permissive; it established a form by which tithes might, for a period not exceeding twenty-one years, be compounded for, with the consent of the landlord and incumbent, but gave no power of forcing a composition on either. As the bill was originally introduced, there was a clause *compelling* the incumbent to accept of a composition; but this was so violently opposed that Government were compelled to consent to its being withdrawn. The relief afforded was thus partial and local only; but still it was considerable; for the collection of tithes in kind was not only a very vexatious and irritating process, which often led to collision and bloodshed, but it imposed a direct additional burden, often of a very heavy amount, on the cultivator. This was not the case in England, where the tenant previously calculated the amount of the tithes, and deducted it from his offer for rent, so that it fell directly on the owner of the soil; nor in Scotland, where the wisdom of its native Parliament had, two hundred years before, established a universal and compulsory process for the composition and sale of tithes over the whole country. But in Ireland, such was the competition for possessions that the peasants bid against each other, till they offered more than the entire worth of the land to their landlords alone;[2] leaving the

[1] 4 Geo. IV. c. 19.

[2] Ann. Reg. 1823, 63, 65.

chapter of accidents to provide for the parson, armed with the power of distraining, and the priest, wielding the thunder of excommunication.

22. Debates on Irish corruption and Catholic emancipation.

A beneficial act was passed in this session of Parliament, which restrained all right of voting at elections under a tenement held in common with others, if the yearly value was together under £20. A great many debates also took place on the alleged malversations of those intrusted with the administration of justice and choice of juries in Ireland. But the motions for inquiry were resisted by the Government, and led to no practical result, except disclosing the deep-seated corruptions which pervaded the country, and withdrawing the attention of all parties from the real maladies by which it was afflicted. The question of Catholic Emancipation was brought on on 17th April, in the course of which Mr Brougham pronounced a warm eulogium on the political consistency of Mr Peel, who had "always pursued a uniform and straightforward course upon the question;" contrasting it with the inconsistency of Mr Canning, who had exhibited "the most incredible specimen of monstrous truckling for the purpose of obtaining office that the whole history of tergiversation could furnish." Mr Canning declared that this was "false," which led to a most violent scene, in the course of which it was proposed that both gentlemen should be committed to the serjeant-at-arms. At length Mr Canning agreed to make a conditional apology, and Mr Brougham did the same. Thus ended this personal affair, which made a great noise at the time, but had no other effect than withdrawing the attention of the country from the real cause of Irish distress, and rendering its discussion the signal only for party contests and personal recriminations. The bad effects of this were soon apparent. The Catholic question was got quit of by a side-wind in the Commons, on a motion for an adjournment, by a majority of 313 to 111;[1] and a bill for extending the right of voting to English Catholics,

April 17.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1823, 79, 81.

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the same as was enjoyed by their brethren in Ireland, though carried in the Commons by a majority of 89 to 30, was rejected in the Lords by 80 to 73.

23. Improvement of the country in 1824.

As the great cause of the extreme distress which had, during the three preceding years, prevailed in Ireland, was the ruinous depreciation of the price of all kinds of agricultural produce to the extent of a half, which had taken place from the operation of the contraction of the currency in 1819; so, when prices were raised by the opposite effects of the extension of the currency by the Bill of 1822, an entirely different set of effects appeared. During the greater part of 1823, indeed, the distress induced by the ruinous fall of the three preceding years kept the country in a constant ferment; but as prices rapidly rose towards the close of the year, and continued comparatively high during the whole of 1824, the distress of the peasantry, and with it the agrarian disturbances, declined. The Insurrection Act was renewed by a majority of 112 to 23, experience having proved that it was the most effectual of all restraints on the violence of the people, and that none, with so small an amount of punishment or suffering, had so surprising an effect in stilling the waves of public discontent.* But the rise of prices produced a gradual but fixed amelioration in the condition of the people; and though the Insurrection Act was renewed, few districts were proclaimed by the Lord-Lieutenant preparatory to its being put in force, and it practically became, from the rise of prices, a dead letter.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1824, 26, 29.

An Irish barrister of ability, Mr North, introduced into

* The Parliamentary Returns showed a very small number brought to trial in comparison with those apprehended under the Act. A few weeks' imprisonment answered the purpose of pacifying the country, without ulterior proceedings. They stood thus:—

| | Apprehended. | Convicted. |
|---|---|---|
| Kildare, | 87 | None. |
| Clare, | 189 | 4 |
| Kilkenny, | 64 | None. |
| Cork, | 117 | None. |
| Kerry, | 132 | 1 |

—*Annual Register*, 1824, p. 27.

the Commons by Mr Canning, gave, in the course of one of these debates, a graphic and veracious account of the condition and miseries of Ireland. "In Ireland," said he, "the people have for a series of years suffered every variety of misery. They have proceeded from one affliction to another. Each season brought its peculiar horror. In one, it was famine; in the next, it was fever; in the third, it was murder. These sad events seemed to form a perpetual cycle, the parts of which were of regular and mournful recurrence. The evils which all felt, all ascribed to different causes. The peasant attributed them to the rapacity of the landlord, the landlord to the bigotry of the clergy. In truth, however, the most conspicuous source of evil was the magnitude of the unemployed population. By no state policy or secret of government is it possible to reconcile tranquillity with idleness. To an energetic people especially, employment is an absolute want. When such a people are left without employment, they become wild, untamable, and ferocious. Disguise it as you will, such people are in a savage state, and will ever fluctuate, as the Irish people have done, between hopeless indolence and desperate mischief. Placed at the very bottom of the scale of human beings, the Irish peasant never looked upwards. He was excited by no emulation, inspired by no hope. He remained fixed on the spot where he first drew breath, without the wish, and, still more, without the power of motion. He saw himself surrounded by men of a religion different from his own, whose interests were at variance with his, and whose chief or sole business he supposed to be, by the force of the sword and the law, to keep him quiet and poor. He saw in the violation of the law no culpability, in its chastisement no retribution. He went to the scaffold surrounded by admiring multitudes, with the spirit of a patriot, the resignation of a martyr, not the repentance of a criminal.[1] His courage was converted into ferocity, his intelligence into fraud;

24. Mr North's description of Irish miseries. May 11.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1824, 30, 31.

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and at last the peasant was lost in the murderer and incendiary."

25. Beneficial working of the Tithe-Composition Bill.

One evil much complained of in Ireland was sensibly abated in this year, in consequence of the Act passed in the preceding. The Tithe-Composition Bill had been extensively carried into operation, and produced very beneficial effects. Within a few months after its enactment no less than ten hundred and three applications had been made from different parishes to carry its enactments into effect. Mr Hume made a motion for an inquiry into the condition of the Irish Church, with a view to a reduction of its establishment, which elicited from Mr Leslie Foster some very valuable statistical details as to the relative numbers of the two rival churches in the different provinces of the country. From them it appeared that, taking the whole country into view, the proportion of Catholics to Protestants was four to one; the great majority in Ulster being Protestant, in the three other provinces Catholic.* It is remarkable that, while so much attention was drawn to the affairs of Ireland, and so much ability exerted on both sides regarding it, it never occurred to either party that the real causes of distress were entirely different from what either contended for, and that, as long as the inhabitants continued wholly agricultural, and the price of their produce was reduced by the contraction of the currency to a half of its former amount, while the country was swarming with two millions of persons almost, if not entirely, without either employment or the means of emigration,[1] which Government refused to

[1] Ann. Reg. 1824, 31, 36.

* The proportions stated by Mr Leslie Foster were—

| | Protestants. | | Catholics. | | Total. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ulster, | 1,250,000 | ... | 750,000 | ... | 1,900,000 |
| Leinster, | 300,000 | ... | 1,500,000 | ... | 1,800,000 |
| Munster, | 200,000 | ... | 2,400,000 | ... | 2,600,000 |
| Connaught, | 40,000 | ... | 960,000 | ... | 1,000,000 |
| | 1,790,000 | | 5,610,000 | | 7,300,000 |

The annual rental, £10,000,000; tithes, 1-17th of that sum.—*Ann. Reg.*, 1824, pp. 32, 33.

afford, it was utterly impossible to expect that any legislative measures could afford effectual relief.

1824. 26. Rise of the Catholic Association.

The extraordinary agricultural distress which prevailed in Ireland from the end of 1819 to the end of 1823 produced, however, one usual result of suffering among a people neglected by the Legislature. Association is the natural resource of mankind in such circumstances; and it is only the more widespread that it arises from real evils, and dangerous that it falls under the lash of the law. The CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION arose at this disastrous period; and so naturally did it spring from the sufferings of the people, and so skilful was the direction given to its proceedings by the able and experienced leaders who guided them, that it eluded all attempts at suppression by Act of Parliament, and continued to exercise a paramount influence on the fortunes of the country till the great change brought about by Providence in the middle of the century. The objects of the Association, as publicly divulged, could not be said to contain anything illegal, and yet the Association itself was perverted ere long to most illegal purposes. The declared objects of the Association were: 1st, To forward petitions to Parliament; 2d, To afford relief to Catholics assailed by Orange lodges; 3d, To encourage and support a liberal and independent press, as well in Dublin as in London—such a press as might report faithfully the arguments of their friends, and refute the calumnies of their enemies; 4th, To procure cheap publications for the various schools in the country; 5th, To afford aid to Irish Catholics in America; and, 6th, To afford aid to the English Catholics. Most praiseworthy and meritorious objects; but these, though the ostensible, were not the real objects of the Association, nor the ones which gave it either its great celebrity or its important effects.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1824, 42; 1825, 23.

The real objects of the Association were very different, and were, beyond all doubt, to accomplish, in the

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27. Real objects of the Association.

first instance, Catholic emancipation, and to acquire for the Catholics the command of the elections both in boroughs and counties; and next, to achieve by legislative means, or, if necessary, by force, the repeal of the Union, the resumption of the Church property to the Roman Catholic clergy, and the restoration of their faith as the dominant religion of the land. These were their ultimate objects, as they now stand fully proved by their own subsequent conduct and words; but in the mean time they proceeded cautiously, and their immediate measures were directed to the following ends: 1st, To collect a large sum of money annually, in name of *Catholic Rent*, from all the parishes in the kingdom, and to employ for this purpose the spiritual power of the priests, who were directed to use it with the utmost vigour towards obtaining contributions from their flocks, and furthering the objects of the Association; 2d, To appoint Committees of Finance, Grievances, and Education—the Grievance Committee was in an especial manner to take the trials in courts of law under their cognisance, and endeavour by every possible means to obtain the conviction of Orangemen and acquittal of Roman Catholics;—and, 3d, To obtain the suppression of all inferior associations, as Whiteboys, Ribbonmen, and the like, and concentrate the whole energies of the Roman Catholic body and their entire hatred at the Orangemen, styled "their natural enemies," into one body, directed by a few heads, and steadily pursuing by every possible means the secret objects of the Association. So numerous were the evils, so pressing the sufferings of Ireland, and so little had been done by the Imperial Parliament for their relief, that it is not surprising that the patriots of that country, often warm and generous, though hasty and unreflecting men, should have thought that the time was come when they were called upon to take the redressing of their grievances into their own hands. But experience has now abundantly proved that the means they took to

effect that redress were the ones most calculated to perpetuate the wretchedness under which they suffered, and that it was from the very reverse of the policy which their representatives pursued that effectual relief to the country was alone to be expected.

28. Roman Catholic question in reference to England.

The Roman Catholic question was not brought forward in reference to Ireland in this session of Parliament (1824); but two bills were introduced by Lord Lansdowne into the Upper House, evidently intended to prepare the way for it in the next. The first of these conferred the privilege of voting for members of Parliament on the English Catholics, a boon which had been conferred upon the Irish so far back as 1793; and the second declared them eligible for various offices in the magistracy, and removed the disabilities on the Duke of Norfolk exercising the office of Earl Marshal of England. Both bills were rejected; not so much on the ground of any danger which they themselves threatened, as of the consequences to which they might lead with reference to the future admission of Catholics into Parliament. A subordinate bill, however, was passed by both Houses, which enabled Roman Catholics to hold offices in the Revenue, without taking any other oaths but those *de fidei* and of allegiance,[1] and another removing the disabilities on the Duke of Norfolk exercising the functions of Earl Marshal of England.[2] These debates were chiefly important as revealing the schism which existed on the subject in the Cabinet, and which, it was foreseen, would ere long lead to a break-up of the Government; for Lord Liverpool and the Earl of Westmoreland spoke in favour of both the bills which were rejected, while the Lord Chancellor took the lead in opposing them.[3]

[1] 5 Geo. IV. c. 79.

[2] 5 Geo. IV. c. 119.

[3] Ann. Reg. 1824, 44, 47.

The question of Parliamentary Reform was not agitated in this session of Parliament, for the general prosperity which prevailed rendered it an unfavourable time for bringing it forward; but a motion by Mr Abercromby to alter the representation of the city of Edinburgh,

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29. Parliamentary Reform, Alien Bill, and reversal of Scottish attainders.

which, according to the Scotch custom, was vested in the magistrates and town-council, not the citizens at large, was negatived by a majority of 24, the numbers being 99 and 75. The increasing strength of the minority on a matter involving this vital question was ominous of change in future and no distant times. On the proposal by Mr Peel to renew the Alien Act, which gave the Government the right to send suspected aliens out of the country, an animated debate took place, in the course of which some important facts regarding the working of that much-contested Act were brought forward. It appeared that the total number of aliens residing in the country in 1824 was 26,500, having gradually increased to that number from 22,500 in 1822; that the total number of persons sent off under authority of the Alien Act, since its introduction in 1816, had been only seventeen, of whom eleven were partisans of Napoleon, and that for the last two years not a single person had been removed under it. Mr Canning announced, in the course of the debate on the question, amidst loud cheers from both sides of the House, that he trusted the bill would expire without another renewal, and the bill extending the Act for two years longer was carried by a majority of 120 to 67. In the same session of Parliament a bill was rejected, by 80 to 50, which proposed to extend to prisoners accused of felony the same privilege already enjoyed by those charged with misdemeanours, of being heard in their defence by counsel; a rejection which affords a curious instance of the tenacity with which lawyers adhere to old institutions, how repugnant soever to every principle of justice or expedience. A more worthy spirit was evinced by a bill which passed both Houses by acclamation, at the special request of the King, which restored the honours of the families of Kenmure, Perth, and Nairn,[1] attainted for their accession to the rebellions of 1715 and 1745, and Mar, the origin of the last of which, as was finely said by

March 23.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1824, 52, 61.

Mr Peel in introducing the bill, "was lost in the obscurity of forgotten time."

This question of the Alien Act is generally the object of fierce contest in Parliament, because its exercise may occasion the removal of popular or royalist leaders in other countries, who have become refugees in this, and whose fate naturally excites commiseration and interest with persons of the same opinions on this side of the Channel. Yet is the true principle which should regulate the matter noways difficult of discovery, and, as usual in such cases, it is to be found in the mean equally distant from the extremes on either side. On the one hand, it is perfectly true, as contended by the opponents of the bill, that it is of the utmost moment that some asylum should exist in Europe for persons who have been stranded in the stormy sea of politics, and with whom such a retreat is an exchange for imprisonment or the scaffold; and so various now are the mutations of fortune, that it is hard to say which of the parties that now divide the world has most interest in the maintenance of such an asylum. On the other hand, it is equally clear that the refugees who obtain the benefit of such an asylum are bound not to abuse the privileges conferred upon them, and, above all, not to convert the resting-place they have acquired into a workshop for exciting sedition and revolution in this and adjoining states. When the exiles who approach our shores, whether royalist or republican, forget this, their first obligation, and make London the centre from which firebrands and bombs are scattered in every direction, they cannot be surprised, and have no right to complain, if they are removed from the asylum, the obligations of which they have so entirely forgotten. And as long as free discussion in Parliament and a free press exist in this country, there is little danger of the powers conferred upon Government to check such an evil being abused.

30. Reflections on the Alien Act.

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31. Act for uniformity of weights and measures.

[1] 5 Geo. IV. c. 74.

Among the important Acts of this session of Parliament must not be omitted one for establishing a uniformity of weights and measures over the whole empire, which passed both Houses and received the royal assent.[1] The old denominations were retained, but they were reduced to uniformity by being all fixed on one standard, and to some degree of certainty by being based on natural divisions. There can be no doubt that this was a very great improvement, although the tenacity of the people, especially in rural districts, to the old measures has prevented the imperial measure, even to this day, coming into universal use. It is only to be regretted that the same simplicity has not been extended to the current coin of the realm by the adoption of the decimal division—a change of all others the most easy to be effected, since it requires nothing but withdrawing the half-crowns from circulation and substituting in their room the new florin, and dividing the shilling into ten pennies instead of twelve: no very arduous undertaking, and attended with obvious benefit in money transactions and the simplification of accounts.

32. Chancery reform.

A matter of much importance in the internal legislation of England was brought before Parliament this year, in regard to which Government wisely conceded a committee of inquiry. This was the administration of justice in the Court of Chancery, in regard to which the most serious charges of delay, expense, and endless multiplicity of proceedings were alleged. There can be no doubt that these complaints were too well founded; and the fact is, that the evils existing in this department were so enormous that the only surprising thing is that they were so long tolerated. Probably this was owing to the usual disposition of party men to make use of existing abuses as an engine of attack against obnoxious individuals, rather than set about their removal with a sincere desire for the public good. The prominent position which Lord Eldon had held for nearly a quarter of

a century in the Government, and the lead he had always taken in opposing Catholic emancipation and the chief liberal measures of the day, had rendered him in an especial manner the object of obloquy and attack. Thus all the delays which existed in the Court of Chancery and the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords, of which the Chancellor was the head, which were certainly very great, were ascribed to his indecision and want of vigour in the despatch of cases, when, in fact, it arose from the enormous increase of business in every department during the period that he held the seals, which had more than tripled. A parliamentary committee at once ascertained this to be the case, and collected much valuable information in regard to this supreme court.[1]*

[1] Ann. Reg. 1824, 67, 71.

33. Bill to suppress the Catholic Association.

The eminently prosperous state of the country in every branch of industry during the first three quarters of 1825 left the Opposition no ground for complaint or debate in Great Britain, and the whole attention of Parliament was fixed on Ireland, which afforded in every department a fruitful field for discussion. The Catholic Association presented the first object of attack, for it had grown up with a rapidity quite unexampled, and had now assumed the most gigantic proportions. It was justly deemed inconsistent with anything like government, for it had come to assume the functions both of the Legislature and the Executive, and even exercised a dangerous, and, in many instances, most pernicious influence over the verdicts of

* The parliamentary committee collected very curious and valuable statistical information in regard to the progress of business in the Court of Chancery and House of Lords during the preceding half-century.

| Years. | Commissions of Bankruptcy. | Appeals to House of Lords. | Balances in hands of Accountant-General. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1770 to 1779, | 709 | 272 | £6,000,000 |
| 1790 to 1800, | 1000 | 492 | 17,000,000 |
| 1812 to 1824, | 2000 | 547 | 34,000,000 |

—*Parliamentary Report*, March 6, 1825; *Ann. Reg.*, 1824, pp. 67, 68.

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juries and the decisions of the courts of law. Mr Goulburn, early in the next session of Parliament, brought forward a bill for its suppression, which was supported by Government, and resisted by the whole strength of the united Whig and Roman Catholic party. It gave rise to animated debates in both Houses, interesting from the ability displayed on both sides, and valuable from the information they afforded, and the light they threw on Irish affairs at this important crisis of their history.

34. Argument of Ministers against the Catholic Association.

On the part of Administration, who brought forward the bill, it was contended by Mr Goulburn, Mr Peel, Mr North, and Mr Canning: "This Association is really and *bonâ fide* acting as the representative of the Irish people, and as such it is enacting rules, promulgating orders, and levying contributions throughout the country. The amount of the Catholic rent levied by the influence of the priests, and under the penalty of ecclesiastical censures, on every parish in the country, though by no means inconsiderable, is the least part of the evil. It is the establishment of such an impost which is the dangerous thing; for it leads the people to look up to other authorities than those recognised by the Constitution, and teaches them to place confidence in a rival power created and fostered by themselves. Every man who pays this tax feels himself identified with the objects of the institution—is pledged to its support; and is pledged to it 'for better for worse, for richer for poorer.' Nor is this all. The Catholic Association in Dublin is a great centre of sedition, from whence, and from the press which it supports, there flows a perennial stream of seditious and turbulent matter into every parish in the kingdom. Then the congregations are harangued from the altars by the priests and the minor members of the Catholic Association—men as devoid of caution as destitute of education, and who are neither controlled by the dread of the press nor influenced by the weight of public opinion. From the Association in Dublin proceeds a host of rent meet-

ings, infinitely more serious than anything which is done in Dublin itself. The objects and measures of the Association are continually changing; no man can say what they are or will be: but be they what they may, they are implicitly followed out by the whole agitators. Their language becomes more violent every day: it is the nature of such associations to generate vehemence. They cannot remain stationary. *Non progredi est regredi.*

35. Continued.

"Is it possible that any man, looking at the Catholic Association—at the means, the power, and the influence of which it is acknowledged to be in possession; at the vast authority with which it is armed, and the acts it has done, and is doing—can seriously think of giving stability and permanence to its existence? Self-elected, self-controlled, self-assembled, self-adjourned, acknowledging no superior, tolerating no equal, interfering in all stages with the administration of justice, denouncing individuals publicly before trial, re-judging and condemning those whom the law has absolved, menacing the independent press with punishment, and openly announcing its intention to corrupt that part of it which it cannot intimidate, and for these and other purposes levying contributions on the whole people of Ireland,—is this an Association which, from its mere form and attributes, independent of any religious question, the legislature can tolerate?

36. Continued.

"Ireland is sharing the general prosperity. The indications of that prosperity, and the extension of it to Ireland, are known to every person throughout the country. But does that circumstance disprove the malignity of an evil which retards the increase of that prosperity, by rendering its continuance doubtful?—which puts to hazard present tranquillity, and disheartens confidence for the future?—which, by setting neighbour against neighbour, and arousing the prejudices of one class of the inhabitants against the other, diverts the minds of both from profitable occupations, and discourages agriculture, manufactures, commerce, and all the arts of peace—every-

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thing which blesses or dignifies social life? The tide of English wealth has been lately setting in strongly towards Ireland. The alarm excited by the Association acts at present as an obstacle to turn that tide, and to frighten from the Irish shores the enterprise, capital, and industry of England. Is it not, then, the duty of Parliament to endeavour to remove this obstacle, to restore things to the course which nature and opportunity were opening, and to encourage and improve in Ireland the capacity to receive that full measure of prosperity which will raise her, by slow degrees, to her proper rank in the scale of nations?

37. Concluded.

"The Catholic Association is too wise in its generation openly to assert its being the representative of the Irish people. Had it done so, no new act of Parliament would have been required to authorise its immediate suppression. But though it has not as yet openly assumed that character, its acts betray that it considers itself as such, and it has that character attributed to it by the entire Catholic body. The repeated statements made in this very debate, as to the Catholic Association being the real representative of the people of Ireland, prove the truth of this statement. Can there coexist in this kingdom, without imminent hazard to dispeace, an assembly constituted as the House of Commons is, and another assembly as completely bearing the representative character, but elected by a different process, actuated by different interests, inflamed by different passions? Does not the very proposition that such is the character and such the attributes of the Catholic Association, even if not altogether true at the present time, warn us at least what the Association, if unchecked, will become? And if the Catholic Association, in the full maturity of its strength, cannot coexist with the House of Commons, shall we not check it in time, before it has acquired that strength and maturity?"[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xii. 170, 171, 464, 468; Ann. Reg. 1825, 30, 33.

On the other hand, it was contended by Sir Henry Parnell, Mr Brougham, and Sir James Mackintosh: "It

is the exclusion of the Roman Catholics from Parliament which is the sole cause of the existence of the Association; and how can the House of Commons, after having in 1821 solemnly recognised their right to a seat in this House, interfere now to put down an Association the object of which is to obtain that very act of justice? Emancipate the Catholics, and the Association will at once die a natural death. Refuse that concession, and how can you persecute those who support it? The proceedings of the Association have no real danger belonging to them; there is no treason or insurrection connected with them, no obstruction to Government, no injury to life or property. The outcry is wholly artificial, and kept up studiously by the party who wish to stop that emancipation. Even if the Catholic Association had been the dangerous body which it is said to be, the character of its leaders, and especially of Mr O'CONNELL, who is a man of sense and talent, is a sufficient guarantee against their being betrayed into dangerous excesses. It has already effected the union of the entire Catholic body; it has directed public attention to their numerous grievances; it has called forth the talents of a large portion of the public press in their support; and by inducing this very debate, it will go far to open the eyes of the English people to the injustice towards Ireland to which they have so long been a party. Why then interfere to suppress an Association, the sole design of which is to effect an object which this House has solemnly approved, to terminate a great and crying injustice, to bring about a great and healing act of justice?

38. Argument in support of the Association.

"It is impossible to maintain, with any show even of reason, that the objects of the Association are illegal. The very fact of this bill being introduced proves that they are not so; if they were, the law is already strong enough to reach them. Disguise it as you will, the real object of the bill is, to put down the Association when it is doing nothing illegal, but when it has become an

39. Continued.

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object of dread from the justice of its cause, and the reality of the grievances of which it complains. What are, not merely its ostensible, but its real objects? To procure and forward petitions to Parliament, to obtain redress for such Catholics assailed by Orange violence as are unable to procure it for themselves, to encourage and support a liberal and enlightened press as well in Dublin as in London, and expose the calumnies by which the Catholic body are assailed, and demonstrate the justice of their cause, to procure cheap publications for the various schools in the country, and afford aid to Irish Catholics in England and America. Is there anything in these objects either dangerous, immoral, or illegal? If there is, where is the association for the purposes of religion or benevolence that may not in the same manner, and on the same grounds, be made the object of legislative persecution?

40. Continued.

"Excited as the public mind in Ireland now is, in consequence of the injustice of which that country has so long been the object, it is not only noways to be regretted, but highly to be desired, that the people should be brought under the control of leaders who may direct their energies to legal and beneficial objects. Deprived of such restraint, there is no saying to what excesses their indignation may lead. There are now in Ireland between seven and eight millions of people, who do not live for the most part in towns or villages as in England, but are spread in huts over the whole face of the country, exempt from all superintendence or control. This immense body of human beings has been banded together for the last thirty years by a sense of common wrongs, and trained by hidden societies in all the practical courses of secret assassination and open insurrection. The sympathy of grievance and religion that is universal amongst them, forms a basis for carrying on with effect the most extensive schemes of popular organisation. If any fixed determination to make a great popular effort should seize

possession of their minds, in vain would the Catholic nobility, the Catholic lawyers, and even the Catholic clergy, exert their utmost endeavours to check them; and universal ruin and destruction must be the inevitable result of such popular efforts. These millions are increasing at the rate of duplication in twenty-five or thirty years. Is it not plain, therefore, that it is not only expedient, but has become a matter of absolute necessity, to break up the secret government which has so long directed the energies of the Irish people to violence and outrage, and attach them, by equal rule and a reciprocity of advantages, to the laws and the union of England? And what is the object of the Association but to avert these terrible disasters, and bring about, by open, fair, and legal means, this blessed consummation?

41. Concluded.

"A great change has taken place in the Catholic mind in Ireland. The more intelligent and educated among them have become accurately acquainted with the grievances under which they labour; they know their own numbers now by a regular census, and feel their own strength. It is chimerical to suppose that, with such a body, the object expected by putting down the Association will be obtained. As the Catholics will, notwithstanding that, still continue to labour under grievances, they will be induced to take such steps to give vent to their feelings as will probably be an evasion of the new law. This is the first of a career of measures that inevitably will end in general confusion and rebellion. Ministers will then come down to the House with a new case of the violation of the constitution, and call for a Coercion Act. Such an act will lead to new acts of evasion and violence on the part of the Catholics, until, by new modes of evading the law, and new laws to coerce popular assemblies, the Catholics of Ireland will by degrees be trained to involve themselves in open insurrection. The union of the two countries, up to this moment, has existed only on paper; there is no cordial national union. Ireland is still, in feeling and in

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fact, a country foreign to England. The people form a clear notion of a distinct Irish and English nation; and the moment the bill passes into a law, the people of Ireland will regard it as a belligerent act on the part of the English nation against the Irish nation, and it will thereafter become impossible to negotiate a peace between the two countries."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xii. 214, 230; Ann. Reg. 1825, 23, 30.

42. The bill is carried, and immediately evaded.

The debate was continued through four nights, the Opposition, consisting both of the whole Whigs and Liberals as well as the friends of the Catholics, having put forth their whole strength on the occasion. The second reading, however, was carried by a majority of 155, the numbers being 278 to 123; and in the House of Lords the majority was proportionately still greater, the numbers being 146 to 44.[2] But this decisive victory on the part of Administration was far from accomplishing the object which Government had in view. The Association immediately dissolved itself; but as quickly a new Association was formed, on such principles as effectually withdrew it from the operations of the Act. Christians of all denominations were invited to join it, in order to obtain redress of the numerous evils which afflicted the country: no oath was required to be taken; and it was expressly declared, "that the new Catholic Association shall not assume, or in any manner exercise, the power of acting for the purpose of obtaining redress of grievances in Church or State, or any alteration in the law of Church or State, or for the purpose of carrying on or assisting in the prosecution or defence of causes civil or criminal." The objects of the new Association were declared to be, to promote peace, harmony, and tranquillity; to encourage a liberal and enlightened system of education; to ascertain the population of Ireland, and the comparative number of persons of the different persuasions; to devise means of erecting suitable Catholic places of worship; to encourage Irish agriculture and manufactures; and to publish refutations of the charges against the Catholics.[3] These resolutions,

[2] Parl. Deb. xii. 522, 899.

[3] Ann. Reg. 1825, 42, 45.

which laid the foundation of the new Catholic Association, were received with vehement applause: but the speeches made on the occasion effectually belied the spirit of the resolutions, and gave a melancholy presage of what might be expected from its future proceedings.*

43. Catholic question, and majority in the Commons on it. March 1.

These animated discussions concerning the Roman Catholic Association were intended only as an introduction to the grand debate on Catholic Emancipation, for which, as the *cheval de bataille* for the season, both parties were preparing their whole strength, and which led to a result highly favourable to the Catholic hopes. It was introduced in the House of Commons, on March 1st, by Sir Francis Burdett, who, in a masterly and eloquent but yet temperate speech, moved for the appointment of a committee to inquire into the grounds of complaint set forth in the Catholic petition which he presented. It was opposed by Mr Peel and Mr Leslie Foster; but the knowledge, which was universal, of the division in the Cabinet on the subject, paralysed the opponents of the motion, and Sir Francis' motion was carried by a majority of 21, the numbers being 248 to 227. This majority, the largest which had been obtained on the subject, was received with vehement cheering in the House of Commons, and justly regarded by all the friends of the Catholics throughout the country as prophetic of the future and not far-distant triumph of their cause.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xii. 558.

44. Fate of the bill in the House of Lords.

If this division in the Commons, however, proved the progress which the Roman Catholic claims had made in the opinions of the popular branch of the Legislature, the fate of the question in the Peers was not less ominous of the difficulties with which it was beset among the aris-

* Mr O'Gorman, the Secretary of the Association, said: "His Majesty's Ministers are not lying on a bed of roses. Independent of their internal dissensions, which I hope God Almighty will increase, their finances are in a ticklish condition. England is beginning to get uneasy, and a cloud appears to be gathering in the north, which might burst, there was no saying how soon, for Russia has 1,300,000 men in arms. All these prospects are sufficient to inspire Irishmen with hope."—*Speech of* O'Gorman, 13th July 1825; *Ann. Reg.*, 1825, p. 45.

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tocratic. The question came on in the House of Lords in April; and as it had been carried by so large a majority in the Commons, the attention of both parties in the country was fixed with the most intense anxiety on the division in the Peers. They were long kept in suspense; as the presenting of various petitions on the subject gave rise, as usual on such occasions, to several desultory debates before the question itself came on. It was brought to a decision, however, on 17th May, when the measure was thrown out by a majority of 65, the numbers being 178 to 113.[1]

May 17. 1 Parl. Deb. xii. 766; Ann. Reg. 1825, 67.

45. Duke of York's declaration on the subject. April 25.

On occasion of one of these petitions being presented, the Duke of York made, in a bold and manly tone, the following declaration, which had an important influence on the ultimate fate of the bill: "Eight-and-twenty years have elapsed since this question was first agitated, under the most awful circumstances, while this country was engaged in a most arduous and expensive, though just and necessary war: the agitation of it had been the cause of a most serious and alarming illness to an illustrious personage now no more, whose exalted character and virtues, and parental affection for his people, would render his memory ever dear to his country; and it produced also the temporary retirement from his late Majesty's councils of one of the most able, enlightened, and honest statesmen of whom this country could boast. Upon this question we are now called upon to decide; and from the first moment of its agitation to the present, I have not for one instant hesitated or felt a doubt as to the propriety of the line of conduct to be adopted in regard to it.

46. Continued.

"A great change of language and sentiment has taken place, since the subject was first introduced, among the advocates for Catholic emancipation. At first, the most zealous of them had endeavoured to impress upon the minds of the people that Catholic emancipation ought not to be granted without establishing strong and effec-

tual barriers against any encroachment on the Protestant ascendancy. But how changed was now their language! Your Lordships are called upon to surrender every principle of the constitution, and to deliver us up, bound hand and foot, to the mercy and generosity of the Roman Catholics, without any assurance even that they would be satisfied with such fearful concessions. The King is bound by his coronation oath to maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, *and the Protestant reformed religion*, established by law. Ours is a Protestant King, who knows no mental reservation, and whose situation is different from that of any other person in the country. I myself, and every other individual in the country, can be released from my oath by act of Parliament, but the King cannot. The oath is a solemn obligation by the person who took it, from which no act of his own could release him; and the King is the third estate in the realm, without whose *voluntary* consent no act of the Legislature can be valid.

47. Concluded.

"If I have expressed myself warmly, especially in the latter part of what I have said, I must appeal to your Lordships' generosity. I feel the subject most forcibly; and it affects me the more deeply, when I recollect that to its agitation must be ascribed that severe illness and ten years of misery which had clouded the existence of my beloved father. I shall therefore conclude with assuring your Lordships that I have uttered my honest and conscientious sentiments, founded upon principles I have imbibed from my earliest youth, to the justice of which I have subscribed after careful consideration in maturer years; and these are the principles to which I will adhere, and which I will maintain, and that up to the latest moment of my existence, *whatever might be my situation of life*, so help me God."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xii. 141, 142; Ann. Reg. 1825, 59, 60.

Immense was the impression which this bold and manly declaration, coming from the next heir to the throne, and a prince whose sincere and intrepid character

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48. Impression it produced over the country. Mr Brougham's speech on the occasion.

left no room for doubt but that he would act up to his opinions, produced over the country. Mr Brougham, to neutralise its effects, the next evening, in the House of Commons, commenced a violent invective against the Duke of York, saying that "the words he was reported to have uttered, but which must have been false, would, if true, have given him alarm, not only for good government, but the constitution of the country, and the stability of the monarchy as by law established and settled by the Revolution of 1688. No man living could believe that a prince of that house which sat on the throne by virtue of the Revolution of 1688, could promulgate to the world, that, happen what would, when he came to another situation, he would act in a particular way. No monarch who ever sat upon the English throne had ever been prepared for such resistance to his people on behalf of the Catholics, as was now not only meditated, but openly avowed against them. Nothing could save the empire from a convulsion but such a large increase in the majority on the Catholic question as might render such imprudent conduct as was openly announced impossible. A little while, and it would be too late; a brief time, and the opportunity now in their hands would be lost for ever."[1] But these statements on either part led to no decisive result. Each side was only rendered the more confirmed in its own opinions; and the Catholic question was thereby rendered an ulcerated sore in the empire, which affected all the adjoining parts so seriously, that it became evident it could not be cut out without endangering the whole body.

[1] Parl. Deb. xii. 208, 214; Ann. Reg. 1825, 62, 63.

# CHAPTER XXI.

## BRITISH EMPIRE FROM THE MONETARY CRISIS OF DECEMBER 1825 TO THE EMANCIPATION OF THE CATHOLICS IN MARCH 1829.

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1. Gloomy prospects of the nation in the beginning of 1826.

THE year 1826 opened with such universal consternation and depression in all classes, from the effect of the terrible monetary crisis at the end of the preceding year, that the consideration of that crisis exclusively engrossed the public mind, and scarcely any other topic occupied the attention of Parliament in the next session. All classes were suffering alike. The banks, struck with terror from the numerous failures which had taken place, could hardly be prevailed on, on any terms, or any security, to make advances to their customers; the merchants, dreading the continued fall in the price of commodities, declined entering into speculations; the manufacturers, finding their usual orders awanting, or seriously diminished, contracted their operations; the workmen, thrown out of employment, became desperate, and vented their despair upon the machinery, which they imagined was the cause of all their suffering. The immense issue of paper without any gold to support it—to the extent of £8,000,000 in three weeks—in the end of December, had indeed arrested the panic, but it had not restored confidence; and Government, by refusing to issue exchequer bills, a relief which had always been afforded on similar occasions in time past,[1] effectually prevented for long the restoration of

[1] Ann. Reg. 1826, 1, 2; Martineau, i. 367, 369.

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credit, or the extension of any relief to the industrious and suffering portion of the community.

2. Acts of rioting in various places.

The general distress, as usual in such cases, led to serious acts of riot and disturbance in several of the manufacturing districts. On all sides the most appalling proofs of wretchedness were afforded, and in some quarters alarming disorders took place. The recent improvements in machinery were generally regarded as the main cause of the general suffering; and in Lancashire the indignation of the operatives against what they deemed an invasion of their birthright, broke out in various and most melancholy acts of outrage. It was a woeful spectacle to see the streets of Manchester, and the chief towns in its vicinity, filled with vast crowds, sometimes ten thousand in number, whose wan visages and lean figures but too clearly told the tale of their sufferings, snatching their food from bakers' shops, breaking into factories and destroying power-loom mills, and throwing stones at the military at the hazard of being shot, rather than relinquishing an object on the attainment of which they sincerely believed their very existence depended. Serious riots took place in Carlisle, in the course of which a woman and child were shot dead; and in Norwich, where twelve thousand weavers were employed, an alarming disturbance, attended with great violence, ensued. In all the iron districts, strikes to arrest the fall of wages took place; and in Dublin and Glasgow immense crowds of operatives paraded the streets entreating relief, which was in some degree afforded by munificent subscriptions opened by the wealthy classes, and which, being judiciously laid out in the purchase of the fabrics of these poor people, instead of merely giving them money, relieved distress to triple the amount which it otherwise could have done.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1826; Chron. 49, 72, 94.

The universal suffering attracted, as well it might, the anxious attention of Government, although, unfortunately, they were so blind to the real causes of the calamity that

they brought forward measures intended to avert, which in reality had only the effect of perpetuating it. In the King's speech the all-absorbing theme was thus alluded to: "His Majesty deeply laments the injurious effects which the late pecuniary crisis must have entailed upon many branches of the commerce and manufactures of the United Kingdom. But His Majesty confidently believes that the temporary check which commerce and manufactures may at this moment experience, will, under the blessing of Divine Providence, neither impair the great sources of our wealth, nor impede the growth of national prosperity."* Yet, while the attention of all classes was riveted on this all-important subject, the only measure of relief which was afforded consisted in a bill which allowed the bonded corn in the ports, estimated at 300,000 quarters, to be sold in the country without paying the duty imposed by the Corn Law, which, after encountering considerable opposition from the landed interest, passed both Houses, but afforded scarcely any relief to the country. What was wanted was not food, but money to buy food.[1]

3. King's speech on the subject, and letting out of bonded grain.

[1] Parl. Deb. xv. 795, 796; Ann. Reg. 1825, 3.

What Government should have done at this juncture was then distinctly pointed out by some of the ablest and most experienced men in Parliament, though unhappily without any effect. The terrible crisis which the country had just gone through was obviously owing to something wrong in the currency; but a great difference of opinion prevailed as to what that error was. The partisans of Administration, and the whole Whig party, were unanimous in holding that the mischief had all originated in the extravagant speculation of the two last years, which had been unduly fostered by the perilous and excessive issue of bank-notes by the country bankers, great part of whom had no sufficient capital to support them; and the only remedy they could devise was to suppress small notes altogether, and render the currency not only in all its parts dependent on the retention of

4. Real causes of the distress, and its remedy.

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gold and silver, but below *£5 to consist entirely of it.* The friends of the country bankers, on the other hand, maintained that nothing could be imagined so perilous, as at this time, when the country had so recently come through a severe monetary crisis, to tamper with the currency, and, in endeavouring to put it on a more stable footing, in a great measure to extinguish it altogether. The debates are of the highest interest, for they relate to one of the most momentous and decisive changes recorded in English history, and which was attended with the most important results; and they are extremely curious and instructive, as affording an example of the ease with which a powerful party can succeed in deluding the public mind, and conducting a nation, amidst universal applause, to the very measures most destructive to its prosperity, and in the end subversive of its institutions.

5. Argument by Ministers in support of the bill suppressing small notes.

On the part of Government it was argued by Lord Liverpool, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Huskisson, and Mr Canning: "The monetary crisis which this country has recently undergone is evidently owing to the mad speculation of the last two years; and that speculation has been mainly fostered by the vast increase in the issues of country bankers' notes which took place during that period of delusive prosperity. In 1822, before the mania of speculation began, the stamps issued for country bank-notes were about £4,200,000 annually; in 1824, when the mania set in, it rose to £6,000,000; and in 1825, when the mania was at its height, it amounted to no less than £8,000,000 annually. This was the amount of stamps annually issued for *new* notes: the amount actually in circulation was in general about 50 per cent more at each period, and in 1825 amounted to £14,000,000. The notes of the Bank of England had also increased during the same period, but in a much less degree: the increase in that quarter was only £3,000,000 — from £19,000,000, in round numbers, to £22,000,000. The great increase in the

currency, therefore, has been in the country bankers' notes; and they are chargeable with all the disasters which have ensued. The only way to prevent a repetition of the evil is to lay the axe to the root of the cause from which it sprung. CHAP. XXI. 1826.

"Such a measure is no innovation; on the contrary, it is the opposite system which is an innovation. In 1775 an Act passed prohibiting the issue of bank-notes for a limited time; and in 1777 another passed, which permanently prohibited the issuing of notes under £5. This continued to be the law until 1797, when, amidst the necessities of the French war, the suspension of cash payments took place until two years after a general peace, and it became necessary to legalise and re-issue small notes, as the gold had all been withdrawn. This suspension was not founded on any belief that the small-note system was at all connected with the prosperity of agriculture, commerce, or manufactures; on the contrary, all parties were agreed that they should be withdrawn as soon as possible, and no one contemplated their continued circulation after the Bank should have resumed cash payments. And yet during the whole of this period, from 1777, manufactures and commerce had flourished notwithstanding the absence of the small notes. 6. Continued.

"The alarm felt on this subject, if founded in reason at all, must be grounded on the idea that the circulation will be diminished by the whole amount of the notes withdrawn; and doubtless, if that were to be the case, a very serious check to industry and the operations of commerce might be anticipated. But nothing is clearer than that no such danger is to be apprehended. During the three years ending with 1822, twenty-five millions of gold sovereigns had been coined, and of these £7,200,000 were shown by the returns to have been exported, and perhaps £10,000,000 in all had left the country. Of these, £1,000,000 had returned in the close of last year; so that the gold circulation might fairly be taken at 7. Continued.

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£16,000,000. The country bankers' circulation, as measured by the stamps issued in 1825, had been £6,000,000 in that year; and supposing double that number to be the amount of notes actually in circulation, the amount will be only £12,000,000—considerably within the gold which has been coined during the three years succeeding 1819. The present amount of country bank-notes in circulation does not probably exceed £4,000,000; while the bank-notes of the Bank of England, in the end of 1825, had risen to £25,000,000. It is chimerical, therefore, to apprehend any undue contraction of the currency from the suppression of small notes; it is only exchanging a perilous and unstable for a firm and secure circulation.

8. Continued.

"There are two ways of effecting this withdrawal; and the only question really for consideration is, which of the two is safest, and likely to occasion least inconvenience to the community. The one is, by enacting that no more small notes should be stamped after a certain future period; the other, to allow those already in circulation to run a certain course till a fixed period, and prohibiting any new ones to be created. Government, after mature deliberation, have determined upon the last of these methods. No new notes are to be henceforth allowed to be stamped; those already in circulation are to be allowed to circulate for three years, but no longer. In consequence of certain differences between the banking systems of Ireland and Scotland, particularly the latter, it is not proposed, in the mean time, to extend the Act to either of these countries; though it is difficult to see any good reason, on principle, on which such a difference is to be long continued.

9. Continued.

"By cautiously and gradually, in this manner, withdrawing the small notes from circulation, one inestimable blessing will be attained—the poor will in a great measure be saved from the pressure and ruin consequent on a monetary crisis. Who are the persons among whom, in the first place, these small notes circulate? The poorer

classes of the community—those to whom the possession of a one-pound note is comparative riches. And when, from the scanty earnings of hard labour and persevering economy, they have amassed three or four pounds, how can they now lay it by but in that kind of money? We have been told, and told truly, that in many districts these notes constitute the whole circulating medium. In what, therefore, must the poor man put his trust but in that paper; and if it fails him, what becomes of his savings? The necessary consequence of such a state of things is, that when an alarm begins, when he hears of failures, the poor man rushes forward to the bank to get his notes exchanged for specie, and the bank, overwhelmed with demands, is obliged to stop payment. He follows the torrent, he increases the difficulty, he adds to the distrust; and to the universality of these feelings may be traced a great portion of the late disastrous events. It is evident, therefore, that the power of issuing these notes is the chief source at once of the insecurity of country bankers, and of the widespread misery which their failure occasions among the poor. The resumption of cash payments in 1819 was unanimously agreed to by the Legislature; but the work was incompletely done, as long as small notes were allowed to remain in circulation. Now is the time to carry it fully out, and avoid all the dangers we have encountered, by establishing the currency upon a safe and lasting foundation.

10. Continued.

"Till small notes are suppressed, this most desirable result never can take place. Experience has proved that, however plausible in theory that *pari passu* circulation of notes and specie may be mutually exchangeable, in practice it cannot exist. The one inevitably destroys the other. *People all prefer notes to coin;* for what reason it is difficult to say, but the fact undoubtedly is so. If crown notes and half-crown notes were issued, crowns and half-crowns would disappear; and if one-pound notes are to be allowed to continue to circulate, sovereigns will

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speedily become a rarity. There never was a gold circulation in general use in the country, except in Lancashire, where no country notes existed; and when, in 1822 and 1823, the Bank of England was most anxious to supply the country with gold, the sovereigns sent down by one coach returned by another. Great sacrifices had already been made to effect the introduction of even a partial metallic currency in the country, and these sacrifices had been made in vain. A large supply of gold had been obtained at a great expense, and it was got only that we might see it depart, and be compelled to purchase it again at a double expense. The currency of the country can never be placed on a solid basis unless country banks are prohibited from issuing notes, except such as are of a considerably higher denomination than the current coin, so as to save it entirely from the competition of the paper currency.

11. Concluded.

"The principle of the measure, therefore, can be resisted only by those who maintain that the pecuniary interests will be best secured by proscribing a metallic currency. Its necessary effect will be to give solidity to the banks themselves, by compelling them to maintain a portion of their circulation in gold instead of worthless paper, and thus avoid those ruinous runs which have proved fatal to so many of the most respectable establishments. It will prevent the widespread misery which such failures now induce, for the savings of the working classes will be laid by in specie; and as it will form the chief medium of circulation, the greatest panic cannot produce a run. Let the Bank of England retain in its coffers as much gold as may be necessary for the ordinary circulation of the country, for the exigencies of Government, and to enable it to adjust an unfavourable state of foreign exchanges.[1] Let every country bank be governed by the same rules, and compelled to keep an amount of gold proportioned to its operations; and this will not only give them security, but occasion a sensitive-

[1] Parl. Deb. xv. 170, 174, 218; Ann. Reg. 1826, 9, 11, 13, 15.

ness to occurrences likely to cause a pressure on the country banks, which will tend to the security of the whole kingdom. The issues will be kept within due bounds, and the gold will be kept within the kingdom."

12. Argument against the proposed measure.

On the other hand, it was argued by Mr Baring, Mr Heygate, and Mr Gurney, all great mercantile men— "The proposed measure is alike inadequate to meet the evils complained of, and ill suited to the present state of the country. What is the cause of the embarrassment now so generally felt by all classes? Is it not the sudden contraction of the currency, and consequent destruction of credit at the close of last year? And what remedy does Government propose for the evil? To contract it still more. Taking the currency at £20,000,000, and the chasm produced by the recent failures in it at £3,500,000, the proposed measure will produce a further chasm to the extent of £7,000,000, with which it will be impossible to carry on the commerce of the country. The postponement of the suppression of small notes for three years is no alleviation, but rather an aggravation of the evil, for it is the nature of the human mind to exaggerate impending evils: nothing is so bad in reality as it appears in prospect. The country bankers, having the suppression of small notes hanging over their heads, must, as a matter of necessity, contract their issues, and this can only be done by refusing accommodation to their customers, and calling up such advances as they have already made. This will of necessity stop industry in numberless channels. This stoppage is what is now going on, and the proposed measure will seriously tend to aggravate it. The extent to which this evil is spreading no man living can estimate, and it will probably lead to consequences which none can contemplate without horror. How is the gap which is to be made in the circulation to be filled up? and if it is not supplied, how is the industry of the country to be supported? As a measure of present

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relief, the proposed measure is unwise and inappropriate; as a measure of prospective security it will be nugatory.

13. Continued.

"The country bankers, of whose improvidence and mad speculation so much is said, are in truth the only persons who have not speculated, and who have exerted all their influence to arrest the spirit of speculation among their customers. A prudent regard for their own safety forced this course of conduct upon them. Where did the extravagant speculation which has been attended with such ruinous consequences originate? In Manchester and Liverpool, a district in which, as well as all Lancashire, no small notes at all were in circulation. Where did it next spread, and assume its most dangerous aspect? In the Stock Exchange of London, a city in which, and for sixty-five miles around, no bankers' notes can be issued. In 1720, the only year in which wild speculations at all similar to those of the last year prevailed, there were no country banks or bankers' notes; and in 1797, when the run took place upon the banks, which rendered the suspension of cash payments a matter of necessity, there were not only no country small notes, but no Bank of England small notes in circulation. It was the failure of the seven great bankers in London, in whose hands the bills of more than a hundred country bankers had been placed, which occasioned the greater part of the country failures; and had it not been for the solidity of the country bankers, the catastrophe would have been far greater than it actually was. So far from the country bankers having begun the mischief, and their notes having been the means of spreading it, it was the merchants and capitalists of Liverpool, Manchester, and London, without small notes, who began it, and the small notes of the country bankers were only brought in at the close of the day to arrest its devastation.

14. Continued.

"The embarrassments which have been experienced are always ascribed to over-trading; but there is a great deal of injustice in this imputation. By far the greater

part of it is to be ascribed to the fluctuations in the currency, which no prudence on the part of the mercantile classes could avert, and no wisdom foresee. In 1823 and 1824, the Bank had accumulated a very great treasure, amounting at one time to £14,000,000, in their coffers; and their circulation was proportionally extended, which, as a matter of course, led to a proportionate increase of the country bankers' issues, which always increase with those of the Bank of England. In consequence of the quantity of money thus thrown into the market, interest fell to 4 and 3½ per cent; and of course, as it could be got on such easy terms, speculations of all sorts were proportionally extended. This ere long led to a run, as such a state of things must always in the end do, on the Bank for gold to carry on the immense undertakings thus set on foot, great part of which were in distant countries, and could be conducted with nothing else; and then the Bank, in its own defence, was compelled suddenly and violently to contract its issues. The banks were compelled to do so, for the first duty of the directors is to look after their own interests; but still the consequences were the same. The London bankers, hard pressed themselves, called upon their correspondents in the country, who again called upon their customers, and soon every creditor came to take his debtor by the throat. Then came the panic, which in such circumstances was inevitable, and the Bank was too much fettered by its engagements with and advances to Government to be able to afford the public any relief. That is the simple account of the whole catastrophe, and what had the country bankers to do with inducing it? So far from their having had any share in bringing it about, they were its first victims; and the real cause is to be found in the monetary operations of the metropolis, where their notes did not circulate, and with which they had no concern whatever.

"The distress which the crisis produced, and which

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15. Concluded.

was much more serious than Government seemed to be aware, will be increased rather than diminished by the proposed change. The very exertions of the country bankers to prepare for the intended change had already most fearfully augmented the general distress. They were indeed preparing; but they were preparing by screwing, almost to destruction, every farmer, manufacturer, or other customer in the country, from whom they could get their money. Was this the way to relieve a country already suffering under a shortening of credit and a want of money? Unless Parliament allowed them more time to meet the new order of things, utter ruin to all the small shopkeepers, manufacturers, and farmers in the country must ensue. The question is not, what is theoretically best, but what, in the circumstances, is most expedient?—and the general distress which pervades the country districts is the first thing to which, in discussing questions of this nature, Parliament is bound to attend. The present measure can be productive of nothing but evil. What is really required, and would relieve the distress, is to establish joint-stock banks on such principles as to induce persons of capital to enter into them, to introduce silver as a standard of currency as well as gold, and to relieve the Bank of England from those incumbrances connected with Government which at present render it impossible for it to come forward on a crisis to relieve the public distress." [1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xv. 198, 220; Ann. Reg. 1826, 11, 14.

16. The bill is carried by a large majority in both Houses.

Ministers carried their measure by an overwhelming majority, Mr Baring's amendment, that "it is not expedient, in the present disturbed state of public and private credit, to enter upon the consideration of the banking system of the country," having been lost by a majority of 193, the numbers being 232 to 39. In the House of Lords the preponderance was equally great, the numbers being so decisive that the matter was not pressed to a division. The prohibition to issue £2 and £1 notes was at the same time extended to the Bank of England, by a majority of

66 to 7—in the face of a protest by Mr Gurney, that "if Government destroyed all the country bankers' notes, and at the same time stopped the issue of small notes by the Bank of England, they would *leave the country in a state of destitution of which they could form no adequate conception.*" This observation produced no sort of impression, and it passed into a law that stamps for £2 and £1 notes should no longer be issued either to the Bank of England or country banks, and that, at the expiration of three years from March 1826—that is, in March 1829—their circulation should be prohibited altogether in England.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xv. 352, 353.

Mr Canning said, upon this question being brought to a vote, that "he hoped the decision of it would be regarded as decisive of the principle, and determine it FOR EVER." It did so: and it may be added that it DETERMINED ALSO FOR EVER THE FATE OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE. Thenceforward a series of causes and effects set in, which no human power was afterwards able to arrest; and which, in their ultimate effects, changed the governing party in the British Islands, induced Catholic emancipation, and an entire alteration of our ecclesiastical policy, overturned the ancient constitution of the empire, and established a new one, resting on an entirely different basis, and directed by entirely different men, in its stead. It brought about Negro Emancipation, the Repeal of the Corn and Navigation Laws, Free Trade, and an entire alteration in our foreign alliances, and policy, and system of government, domestic, foreign, and colonial. The Act of 1826, justly regarded as the complement of that of 1819 in regard to monetary measures, and which rendered our entire circulation and mercantile credit dependent on the retention of gold, the very thing which the daily-extending operations of commerce rendered it impossible at all times to retain, is to be regarded as the turning-point in our whole history, domestic, social, and foreign; and without a steady observation of it, and appreciation of its effects,

17. Vast importance of this decision.

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all attempts to explain, or even understand, the subsequent changes which occurred in the British empire will be nugatory.

18. Way in which the changes it induced were brought about.

To understand how this came to pass, and how such mighty effects flowed from a change at first sight so trivial as the suppression of small notes, and the substitution of sovereigns in their room, it is only necessary to reflect on the *universal* influence which, in an industrious and highly-civilised community such as that of Great Britain, the price of commodities—that is, the remuneration earned by industry—has on the well-being, and through it on the feelings, opinions, and desires of all classes, and then on the immediate and decisive influence which the expansion or contraction of the currency has on these prices and that remuneration. It is a mistake to suppose that political discontent, or an earnest desire for change, either social or religious, is ever excited among the people of this country by mere fickleness of disposition, or the arts of demagogues, how skilful in their vocation soever they may be. That is sometimes the case among a people ardent and changeable, like the French, who have been long excited by the changes of revolution, and among whom large parties have come to look for advancement by its success. But in a peaceable industrious community like that of Great Britain, intent on individual well-being and social amelioration, it is in *general suffering* that the foundation must be laid for the general desire for political change. Demagogues, when the feeling is once excited by this means, often inflame it, and determine the direction which it is to take, but they cannot call the passion into being. All the popularity of the cry for cheap bread, and all the talents of Mr Cobden, would have failed in bringing about the repeal of the Corn Laws, had not five bad seasons in succession brought the reality and evils of *dear* bread home to every family; and all attempts to pacify Ireland while the prices of agricultural produce were unremunerating, were as fruitless as all attempts to

disturb it have been since the great emigration, and the opening of the huge banks of issue, by Providence, in California and Australia, have secured an adequate return for rural labour in the Emerald Isle.

19. Way in which prices affect this desire for political change.

To be convinced of the decisive effect which the destruction of small notes, and entire founding of the currency on gold, has had on the future destinies of Great Britain, we have only to cast our eyes on the table below, which shows the immediate effect of these changes on the prices of commodities, and the speedy result of their decline or rise in inducing or preventing political change. Three years of suffering and general misery followed the resumption of cash payments by the bill of 1819, and the determination of suppressing small notes in 1823, then announced. This absolutely forced Government to alter the law, and prolong small notes for ten years longer; and three years' unbounded prosperity, good prices, and general contentment followed the change. The unfortunate dependence of our currency on gold by the bill of 1819, coupled with the entire abstraction of that gold to carry on our South American speculations, brought on the terrible monetary crisis of 1825; and it was immediately succeeded by the stoppage of the issue of stamps for small notes, and their announced suppression in three years. Three years of low prices and misery followed, which, driving to desperation an agricultural country in which they operated most powerfully, produced such an outcry as forced Catholic emancipation on a reluctant Government. The entire suppression of small notes took effect in 1829, and three years of still lower prices and increased misery followed, which induced general discontent and political agitation, and ended in the Reform Bill, the passing of which was a virtual revolution, and occasioned a total change in our entire policy, foreign and domestic. So close and invariable is this connection, and so uniformly do the same effects follow from the same causes, that we have only to look at the

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state of the money market in London, the rate of discount fixed by the Bank of England, and the number of notes in circulation, for any considerable time during the last half-century, to be able to predict with unerring certainty the tone of general feeling, the amount of general suffering or happiness, and the degree of political change, which is immediately to follow.*

20. Error in the debates in Parliament on both sides on this question.

The persons who debated the suppression of small notes in 1826, able and well informed as they were on both sides, took a very partial view of this great question; and subsequent and dear-bought experience has enabled us to discover wherein their error consisted. They argued it on the one side as if the sole point for consideration was, how the currency could be rendered secure, and the holders of it be saved from those terrible failures which had recently spread such universal consternation; on the other, as if the chief danger to be apprehended was the shortening or cutting off of credit to persons engaged in commerce or agriculture, and the suspension of

* AMOUNT OF PAPER IN CIRCULATION, THE EXPORTS, IMPORTS, REVENUE, PRICE OF WHEAT AND COTTON, WITH THE GREAT POLITICAL CHANGES IN GREAT BRITAIN IN EVERY YEAR FROM 1818 TO 1832, BOTH INCLUSIVE.

| Years | Bank of England Notes | Country Banks | Total | Com. Paper discounted at Bank | Exports, Declared Value | Imports, Official Value | Revenue | Price of Wheat per Quarter | Price of Cotton per lb. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | s. d. | s. d. |
| 1818 | 26,202,150 | 20,507,000 | 46,709,150 | 5,113,748 | 46,112,800 | 36,885,182 | 53,747,795 | 80 8 | 1 11 |
| | | | Bank Rest | riction A | ct passed | July 7, 18 | 19. | | |
| 1819 | 25,252,600 | 15,701,328 | 40,953,928 | 6,321,402 | 34,881,727 | 30,776,810 | 52,648,847 | 66 3 | 1 3 |
| 1820 | 24,299,340 | 10,576,245 | 34,875,785 | 4,672,123 | 36,126,322 | 32,438,650 | 54,282,958 | 54 6 | 1 2 |
| 1821 | 20,295,300 | 8,256,180 | 28,551,480 | 2,772,587 | 36,333,102 | 30,792,760 | 55,834,192 | 49 0 | 0 8½ |
| 1822 | 17,464,790 | 8,416,430 | 25,881,220 | 3,622,151 | 36,650,039 | 30,500,094 | 55,663,650 | 38 11 | 0 11½ |
| | | Small | Notes pro | longed for | 10 years, | July 7, 18 | 22. | | |
| 1823 | 19,231,240 | 9,920,074 | 29,151,314 | 5,624,693 | 36,375,342 | 35,798,707 | 57,672,999 | 52 0 | 0 11 |
| 1824 | 20,132,120 | 12,831,352 | 32,963,472 | 6,255,343 | 38,422,312 | 37,552,935 | 59,362,403 | 64 3 | 0 11½ |
| 1825 | 19,398,840 | 14,980,168 | 39,379,008 | 7,691,464 | 38,870,851 | 44,137,482 | 57,273,869 | 63 0 | 1 0 |
| | | Small | notes limit | ed to 3 | years, Feb | ruary 26, | 1826. | | |
| 1826 | 21,563,560 | 8,656,101 | 30,219,661 | 7,369,749 | 31,536,724 | 37,686,113 | 54,894,989 | 55 8 | 0 10½ |
| 1827 | 22,747,600 | 9,985,300 | 32,732,900 | 3,389,725 | 36,860,376 | 44,887,774 | 54,932,518 | 50 2 | 0 8½ |
| 1828 | 21,357,510 | 10,121,476 | 31,478,986 | 3,322,754 | 36,483,328 | 45,028,805 | 55,187,142 | 71 8 | 0 8½ |
| Cat | holic eman | cipation pa | ssed April | 13, 1827. | —Small n | otes extin | guished F | eb. 26, | 1829. |
| 1829 | 19,547,380 | 8,130,137 | 27,877,517 | 4,589,370 | 35,522,627 | 43,981,317 | 50,786,682 | 71 8 | 0 8 |
| 1830 | 21,464,700 | 7,841,396 | 29,306,096 | 3,654,071 | 37,927,561 | 46,245,241 | 50,056,616 | 55 4 | 0 10 |
| 1831 | 18,538,630 | 7,914,216 | 26,452,846 | 5,848,478 | 36,859,738 | 49,713,889 | 46,424,440 | 64 10 | 0 9 |
| 1832 | 18,542,000 | 8,221,895 | 26,763,895 | 3,247,169 | 36,133,698 | 44,586,741 | 46,988,755 | 58 3 | 0 10 |
| | | | Reform | Bill pas | sed July | 1832. | | | |

—PORTER, third edition, pp. 475, 359, 360, 356. TOOKE *On Prices*, vol. ii. pp. 382, 383, 387, 389.

industry which might ensue in consequence. What was alleged on both sides was in part the truth, but on neither was it the whole truth. Neither party seemed to be aware of *other* effects resulting from the measure under discussion, which subsequent experience has nevertheless completely brought to light, and which have caused the paramount importance of the decision now taken, as bearing on future times.

21. Vital points overlooked on both sides.

The first of these is the consideration that small notes, from their adaptation to small, and therefore the great bulk of transactions, are the ones which can chiefly be relied on as likely to remain in circulation; and upon the plenty or scarcity of them, with the public, the ease or tightness of the money market is mainly dependent. Every banker knows this; if any private person doubts it, let him reflect whether he most frequently has several £5 notes, or an equal amount in sovereigns or £1 notes, in his pocket. The second is, that the plenty or scarcity of these notes, or of sovereigns, in circulation, determines not merely the amount of credit which persons engaged in either commercial or agricultural speculations are to receive at the time, but also *the price of the articles in which they deal* for a couple of years, and consequently whether their business is to be a gainful or a losing one for a long period. Invariably it will be found that a contraction of the currency is followed, not only by a great and most distressing diminution of accommodation, and destruction of credit to persons engaged in business, at the moment it takes place, but by a lasting reduction of prices, often continuing for years together, and which occasions the destruction of a large proportion of these persons. The third is, that a currency, consisting, below £5, entirely of gold and silver, is liable to be entirely withdrawn at times by the necessities of war or the changes of commerce; and, consequently, if there is no other currency equally adapted to ordinary operations to supply its place, entire ruin to credit and industry may at any time be induced, without

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the possibility of human wisdom or foresight guarding against it. A campaign on the Rhine or the Danube, three weeks' rain in Great Britain during August, a potato rot in Ireland, a great demand for gold in America, may at any time bring ruin upon the whole industry of the country, when most wisely conducted, and in the most prosperous state, and sap the very foundations of our national existence, by driving some hundred thousand of our most industrious and valuable citizens annually, for a course of years, into exile. This is exactly what happened in 1847, and from the effects of which the nation is still (1854) suffering in the annual decline of its population; and the same effects may be confidently expected to return from the same cause, as long as the ordinary circulation of the country is rested entirely on a metallic basis.

22. What should have been done with the currency.

What the Legislature should have done in 1826 on this all-important question is sufficiently obvious, and had been so clearly pointed out by experience, that had not a small but influential portion of the community, who, from their wealth, got the command of the public press, been interested on the other side, it was impossible that the proper remedy could have been mistaken. What brought on the crisis was the entire dependence of the circulation on gold, which inflamed speculation as much in 1824 and 1825, when the precious metals were plentiful, credit was high, and prices of everything were rising, as it starved industry and ruined credit in the end of 1825, when twelve millions of sovereigns were drawn away to South America. What rendered it so eminently disastrous, and the ruin it induced so widespread, was the great number of failures among the country bankers, and the destruction of industry which took place by the sudden withdrawal of all credit from their customers. Induced by the abstraction of twelve million sovereigns, it was stopped by the issue of eight million additional Bank of England notes, when the Bank had only £1,000,000 in specie to

meet notes to the amount of £25,000,000! What should have been done, therefore, was to guard against the ruinous effects of an exportation of the sovereigns, by providing an issue of notes to the amount of the gold withdrawn, not convertible into specie, and therefore not liable to disappear, and to have averted the worst effect of the country bankers' failures, by issuing small notes of the Bank of England to the amount required by the country, or compelling the country bankers to deposit Government securities with the Bank of England to the full amount of the notes they issued. Instead of this, they continued the entire dependence of the currency on gold, and suppressed small notes in England altogether—the very measures best calculated to insure a recurrence of the disasters of which the nation had so recently experienced the bitterness.

23. Measures of relief proposed by Government.

How strongly wedded soever the Government and great majority of the House of Commons were to the cheapening system, and however resolute to face all imaginable danger, in order to carry it out by enhancing, by every possible means, the value of money, the necessities of the country drove them into some measures of an opposite tendency, and which in a considerable degree relieved the general suffering. The first of these was a bill allowing private bankers to have an unlimited number of partners, instead of six, to which they were by law restricted—a just and wise measure, and which the jealousy and influence of the Bank of England alone had prevented being earlier adopted. The second was an Act authorising the establishment of branches of the Bank of England in the country towns—a wise measure also, and which tended to introduce in a wider degree the circulation of small notes of the Bank of England during the three years they were allowed to remain in circulation. Finally, upon the most urgent petitions from Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, and all the other manufacturing towns, setting forth the necessity of some assistance from Government, Ministers

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agreed to guarantee advances by the Bank on goods and other securities, to the extent of three millions. This was deemed a better mode of proceeding than issuing exchequer bills themselves, to which they were strongly urged, as Government, it was said, had nothing to do with the currency or the banking operations of individuals. But although that principle might be well founded in the general case, it assuredly was not so in this, when the crisis which had ensued had been caused entirely by the Government itself resting the currency entirely on a metallic basis, and then going into measures connected with South America which caused that basis to be cut away.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1825, 30, 41.

24. Banking system in Scotland and Ireland.

The bill for the suppression of small notes was not by its provisions extended to Scotland or Ireland, in both of which countries a different banking system had long prevailed, subject to none of the objections stated against the English country banks, and to the existence of which the rapid progress both countries had made in wealth and industry of late years was mainly to be ascribed. In Scotland, in particular, a system of banking had been in existence for above a hundred and thirty years, which, combining prudence with liberality, was established on so firm a footing that it had stood with entire success the storm which had proved so fatal in the southern part of the island. There were thirty banks in the country, nearly all of which issued notes which were in universal circulation, and had entirely superseded gold in the ordinary transactions of business with all classes. These notes amounted in general to about £3,500,000; and to this issue, which gave to a country not as yet possessing it all the advantages of realised capital, the extraordinary progress which the country had made both in agriculture and manufactures was, beyond all question, to be chiefly ascribed.[2] Only one failure had occurred in the memory of man, and that was of a country bank doing little business, during the crash of 1825; and Scotland, in

[2] Ann. Reg. 1825, 26, 27, 31; Parl. Deb. xiv. 237, 249.

consequence, had suffered greatly less than England at that disastrous epoch.

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25. Sir Walter Scott prevents the suppression of small notes in Scotland and Ireland.

It was not proposed, in the first instance, to extinguish small notes in Scotland, but the known opinions of Government, and the course of examination by the adherents of Administration of the witnesses who were questioned on the subject in committees of both Houses of Parliament, left no room for doubt that, in the next session at latest, the law would be made the same in both ends of the island, and that the fate of Scotch and Irish notes would be sealed. In this extremity was seen what can be effected by the vigour and patriotism of one man. As soon as it was known in Edinburgh that the Scotch notes were seriously threatened, there appeared in the columns of the *Weekly Journal*, a paper conducted by the Messrs Ballantyne, a series of papers on the subject, signed "Malachi Malagrowther," in which the public soon recognised the vigour, sagacity, and fearless determination of SIR WALTER SCOTT. Albeit closely connected both by political principle and private friendship with the Administration, that great man did not hesitate a moment to break off from them on this momentous question, and to sacrifice both a sense of past obligations and the hopes of future preferment on the altar of patriotic duty. His efforts were crowned with entire success. Scotland rose as one man at the voice of the mighty enchanter; petitions against the threatened change crowded in from all sides and the most influential quarters. Ireland followed in the wake of its more energetic and far-seeing rival; and in the end Ministers gave a reluctant consent. The decisive words were at length wrung from Mr Huskisson, "Well, let them keep their rags, since they will have them." The rags were kept; the small-note currency was saved in Scotland and Ireland from destruction, and has ever since been enjoyed by both countries; and the consequence has been, that, excepting in so far as they have been affected by the monetary crises of England, or have been chastised by the

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visitations of Providence, both countries, and especially Scotland, have enjoyed a career of unbroken industrial prosperity. Never, perhaps, did a private individual, not wielding the powers either of legislation or government, confer so great a blessing on his country as Sir Walter Scott did on this occasion; and it called forth from the Chancellor of the Exchequer an ironical compliment to Scotland, veiled under the words of eulogy, which showed how sorely their defeat had been felt by Government.[1]*

[1] Ann. Reg. 1826, 26, 28; Parl. Deb. xiv. 1318, 1319.

26. Commencement of the Emigration question.

"The miserable," says Miss Martineau, "are always restless: hunger roams from land to land as pain tosses on the bed it cannot leave. The poor of Ireland every year, and, when food or work fall off from other causes, the grave and decent poor of England and Scotland also, wander away, shipping themselves off to the westward, or to our farthest settlements in the East. The subject of EMIGRATION must sooner or later become of interest and importance to every civilised, and soonest to an insular kingdom."[2] The great emigration from the British Isles, which since has become so immense, and has come to exercise so important an influence on the fortunes of this country and of the world, may be dated from this period: as the notes were drawn in, the poor began to go out. The number of annual emigrants from the United Kingdom, which had sunk to 8000 during

[2] Martineau, Thirty Years' Peace, i. 371.

* "But, sir, I confess that when I have been passing in review all the signal triumphs which Scotland has achieved in all that adorns, and ennobles, and benefits the human race; when I have recalled the grace, the originality, and the genius of her poets, the eloquence, the accuracy, and research of her historians, the elaborate lucubrations, and the profound discoveries of her philosophers; when I have watched their progress, either when they traversed the delightful regions of fancy, or penetrated the depth and recesses of history or science, I never thought of including among her worthies the members of the Excise Board. Our present measures, dictated alone by the necessity of judicious retrenchment, may indeed be represented as punishments inflicted on an innocent and unoffending people, and the wrath of Scotland may be denounced against their author; but as long as I am armed with the consciousness of seeking to diminish the burdens, and to increase the happiness of the people, I can look without terror at the flashing of the Highland claymore, though evoked from its scabbard by the incantations of the first magician of the age."—*Speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer* (Mr ROBINSON), Feb. 13, 1826; *Parl. Deb.*, vol. xiv., pp. 1318, 1319.

the prosperous years of 1823 and 1824, rose rapidly after the monetary measures of 1826, until, in the year 1832, when the Reform Bill passed, it had reached the then unprecedented number of 103,000.* This emigration, though not a third of what it has been for some years past at this time (1854), was more than five times what it had ever been before, and spoke volumes as to the suffering felt by the working classes, which had thus come to overbear feelings the most powerful, and obliterate attachments the most profound. "The restlessness which forces upon us the question of emigration," says Miss Martineau, "is of course greatest in seasons of adversity; and in the adversity of the year 1826 it was fierce enough to originate what may prove to be an important period in our national history." [1]

[1] Martineau, i. 371.

27. Appointment of a committee on emigration.

How little inclined soever Government at this time were to give any public encouragement to emigration, and however imbued with the popular doctrine that improvidence must be left to its own punishment, and misery, like other things, find its own level, the cry of distress which arose from all parts of the empire in the spring of 1826 was so piercing that they were compelled to make a show at least of doing something on the subject. Nothing more was attempted than to appoint a select committee to inquire into the expediency of encouraging emigration from the United Kingdom. In 1823, during the severe distress produced by the Bill of 1819 contracting the currency, a committee had been appointed, and an experimental grant of £50,000 voted for the removal of emigrants to Canada; and Mr Wilmot

* Emigrants from the United Kingdom from 1820 to 1833.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1820, | 18,984 | 1827, | 28,003 |
| 1821, | 13,194 | 1828, | 26,092 |
| 1822, | 12,349 | 1829, | 31,198 |
| 1823, | 8,860 | 1830, | 56,907 |
| 1824, | 8,210 | 1831, | 88,160 |
| 1825, | 14,891 | 1832, | 103,140 |
| 1826, | 20,900 | 1833, | 62,684 |

—*Parliamentary Returns;* Porter's *Progress of the Nation,* 128, 3d edit.

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Horton, one of the under-secretaries for the colonies, who now moved for a fresh committee, reported that two hundred and sixty-eight persons had availed themselves of the Government offer, who had been settled in Canada at an average expense of £22 a-head. Several eminent political economists, however, and in particular Mr M'Culloch, had given strong opinions before the former committee against any Government grant on the subject—a doctrine which met with the cordial approbation of the Lords of the Treasury, and was re-echoed by many whose intelligence and principles might have led them to a very different conclusion.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xiv. 1362, 1363.

28. Debate on the subject in the House of Commons.

In moving for this committee, Mr Wilmot Horton, whose efforts on this subject are deserving of the very highest praise, observed: "I do not pretend to say whether Mr M'Culloch's doctrine is right or wrong; but all events, the very first principle of emigration is, that the persons sent out should be assisted by the mother country for a certain time, until they receive such an impetus as will enable them to go forward themselves. Nor can the assistance thus afforded be considered as so much lost or thrown away, for the mother country will share its eventual advantages, and the capital thus employed, though transferred to another place, still remains within the empire. The question of emigration mixes itself up with our whole colonial system: both parties are benefited; and by increasing emigration we shall be increasing the aggregate profits of the empire. Is the system of our ancestors to be departed from or not? Is a measure which seems calculated to convert a riotous peasantry into a class of industrious yeoman and farmers not deserving of consideration at this present time, when we are devising improvements in our criminal code, and endeavouring to lessen crime?" "Give the poor man £20," said Mr Hume in reply, "and he will establish himself as well in Ireland as anywhere else. Mr M'Culloch said that sending out one hundred thousand

persons would be no more than a drop of water in the ocean. Five hundred thousand might have some effect, provided reproduction could be prevented; for otherwise, in two or three years we should have the same number again." The committee was agreed to in a very thin House, which narrowly escaped being counted out.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xiv. 1363, 1364.

29. Reflections on this subject, and its vast importance.

From such small beginnings did the great question of emigration take its rise, which has now assumed such colossal proportions! What would the members who now slipped away to dinner, or their clubs, the moment the subject was mentioned, have said if they could have foreseen that in less than thirty years this was to become the question of questions to the British empire and the whole globe; that three hundred and sixty thousand emigrants were for a course of years together to leave the shores of Great Britain and Ireland, and five hundred thousand annually those of Europe; that our exports to our colonies were to rise to thirty millions annually, and to one—that of Australia, not yet numbering five hundred thousand inhabitants—reach the enormous and almost incredible amount of £14,500,000, while it yielded to the local government a revenue of £3,600,000 a-year!* In this overlooked and neglected question was to be found the remedy, and the only remedy, for the manifold ills of Ireland—a source of daily increasing strength to the British empire, and the great means by which the ends of Providence, for the dispersion of mankind and the civilisation of the world, were to be carried into effect.

A signal error, accompanied by the most disastrous consequences, long prevailed on this subject. This was the opinion, which was all but universal at that period,

* Exports to United States of America and Australia.

| Years. | America. | Australia. |
|---|---|---|
| 1845, . . . | £7,142,837 ... | £1,201,076 |
| 1853, . . . | 23,142,839 ... | 14,513,700 |

—*Parliamentary Returns*, Sept. 2, 1854.

Perhaps it is impossible to exhibit the wonderful influence of the gold regions of California and Australia so clearly as by these figures.

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and is only now beginning to be abandoned, that the migration of the poor should be left to their own resources, and that any attempt to give an impetus to it by the assistance of Government was unwise, and might come to be pernicious. There never was a more erroneous opinion. Admitting that the strength of a State is at all times to be measured by its numbers, *coupled with their well-being*, what is to be said to the condition of a country which is overrun with paupers, who cannot by possibility find a subsistence, and must, in one way or other, fall as a burden on the more prosperous classes of the community? Emigration, when they have it in their power, is, in such circumstances, their only resource; and if it is left to the unaided efforts of the working classes, what is to be expected but that the better conditioned of these classes will go off, and leave the destitute and paupers behind? Thus the holders of small capital, whether in town or country, the little farmers, the small shopkeepers, the workmen who have amassed ten or fifteen pounds—in other words, the employers of labour—disappear, and none are left but the rich, who will not, and the poor, who cannot, emigrate. No state of things can be imagined more calamitous; and it only becomes the more so when measures are in progress through the Legislature calculated to diminish the price of commodities, and consequently lessen the remuneration of industry, and passions afloat among the people which lead them to long passionately for a general, and, it is to be feared, unattainable felicity.

30. Prevailing errors on the subject.

31. Continued.

The common sophism, that it is useless to send the poor abroad, because their place will soon be supplied by others from the impulse given to population at home, admits of a short and decisive answer. It takes a week to send a poor man abroad; *it takes twenty years to supply his place.* In the interval between the two, the supply of the labour market is lessened, and the pressure on the working classes diminished. Even, therefore, if every

one sent abroad caused the production of one at home who would not otherwise have come into the world, there is a great gain: the supply is kept twenty years behind the demand occasioned by the removal. But the truth is, that the emigration of the poor, so far from occasioning their reproduction, has a tendency to check it. It is among the utterly destitute that the principle of population always acts with most force, because they are wholly uninfluenced by the reason and artificial wants which in more comfortable circumstances restrain it. This has now been decisively demonstrated. Since the great emigration from Ireland began, in 1847, the population, so far from having increased, has declined above 2,000,000: the cottars have got better clothes, better beds, more comforts, higher wages, but not more children.

32. Finances.

The prosperous state of the country during the preceding year enabled the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take credit for the large amount of taxes, amounting to £3,146,000, taken off in that year, making, with those of the three preceding years, above eleven millions taken off since 1822, and £27,522,000 since 1815.* He observed with pride that, notwithstanding this great reduction of taxation, nearly £23,000,000 of debt had been paid off in the last three years, funded and unfunded, being at the rate of £7,500,000 a-year, and that the annual charge of the debt during the same period had been diminished by no less than £1,339,000. Such were the financial resources of the country during the three years that small notes had been in circulation, and the nation had enjoyed the advantage of a currency adequate to its necessities, and capable of sustaining prices.

* Viz.:—

| Years. | Repealed Sums. |
|---|---|
| 1822, | £3,355,000 |
| 1823, | 3,280,000 |
| 1824, | 1,727,000 |
| 1825, | 3,146,000 |
| | £11,428,000 |

| Debt paid off since 1822. | |
|---|---|
| Funded Debt, | £18,401,000 |
| Unfunded, | 4,577,000 |
| Paid off in three years, | £22,978,000 |
| Annual charge lessened by | £1,339,000 |

—*Ann. Reg.* 1826, 71, 72; and *Parl. Deb.*, xiv. 1311-1326.

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But the deplorable state of commerce and manufactures in the beginning of 1826 rendered it impossible in that year to make any reduction of taxation. On the contrary, he anticipated a diminution of no less than £1,300,000 in the excise alone, and could only hold out the hope of a surplus of £714,000, being not a tenth of that of the preceding year.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xiv. 1315, 1322; Ann. Reg. 1826, 73, 74.

33. Motion for the repeal of the Corn Laws.

The year 1826 witnessed the first serious discussion which had occurred since they were established in 1814, for the REPEAL OF THE CORN LAWS. This question, which became so momentous in after years, had never been mooted for a long period,—for this obvious reason, that the contraction of the currency had lowered prices of agricultural produce so much that it was thought they could not well be lower, and more distress prevailed among those engaged in its production than among those who depended on the various branches of manufacturing industry. Now, however, the case was in some measure altered. Distress had spread to all classes alike, and, if not more acutely felt, was at least more loudly complained of in the manufacturing than in the agricultural districts. The operatives, suffering under a great and sudden fall of wages, vehemently demanded a corresponding diminution in the price of their subsistence. Government, anticipating such a demand, had in the close of the preceding year sent a very intelligent gentleman, Mr Jacob, on a mission to the various harbours in the north of Europe, to ascertain the price of various kinds of grain, and at what rates they could be brought to this country. He brought back a great deal of valuable information, which was embodied in a Report that was printed and laid before both Houses of Parliament. From thence it appeared that the price of wheat in some parts of the north of Germany was 14s., and in some as low as 10s. a quarter; and that, including every charge, it could be brought to any British harbour at from 20s. to 25s. These prices, compared with 56s. to 60s., which wheat

bore at the same time in England, made a prodigious impression, the more so, as the wages in the manufacturing districts had fallen during the last three months from thirty to forty per cent, and great numbers of persons of both sexes were out of employment altogether. The opinion consequently became general, and was eagerly spread by the leaders of the popular party, that all the public distresses were owing to the Corn Laws, and would be effectually, and for ever, cured by their repeal. The time was deemed, in consequence, favourable for bringing forward the question, and a motion was made on the subject, in the House of Commons, by Mr Whitmore.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1826, 44, 49.

34. Argument for the repeal of the Corn Laws.

On the part of the advocates of the repeal, it was argued by Mr Whitmore, Mr Phillips, and Sir Thomas Lethbridge: "The present moment, when we are on the eve of a general election, may possibly be an inconvenient one for the discussion of this great question; but the circumstances of the country are so pressing, the general distress is so overwhelming, that it is not safe to delay the discussion of it for a single hour. After Government has applied the principles of free trade to every other branch of industry, it becomes indispensable to apply it also to that which has for its object the providing subsistence for the workman; for what can be so unjust as to pay him his wages at the reduced rate produced by free trade, and compel him to buy food for himself and his family at the high rate produced by a monopoly in the raising of grain? The British manufacturer can never enter unprotected into competition with his Continental rivals, while the chief means of his subsistence are kept up at an artificial rate, far above their cost in any other country of Europe. If reciprocity of trade is to be established at all, it is evident that we ought to select those articles for its operation in which foreign countries had the greatest interest. Now, to all the countries from which grain is to be obtained, nothing is of so much importance as the exportation of corn, and yet our system

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of Corn Laws had actually been diminishing in those countries the production of that with which alone they can purchase our manufactures. In consequence of our prohibitory system, the price of wheat in some parts of Germany is only 14s. the quarter, in some only 10s. The result is a diminished production of grain on their part, and a diminished ability, in consequence, to purchase our manufactures. This appears from Mr Jacob's report, who states that the exportation from Dantzic and Memel, which from 1801 to 1805 had been 549,365 quarters, sunk, in the years from 1821 to 1825, to 83,000 quarters, and a similar falling off had everywhere taken place. If home grain was so low as 56s. to 60s., *we need never fear a greater importation than* 400,000 *quarters*; and with such an average price the English agriculturists ought not only to be satisfied, but to regard themselves as the most enviable class of the community.

35. Continued.

"It is this free trade which Adam Smith has so beautifully described, as exhibiting the harmonious operation of the commercial system; by means of which the private interests of individuals, the more they are exercised, conduce the more to the general prosperity of the community. But the Corn Laws tend alike to depress the general interest, and to ruin the individual trade. Between 1817 and 1822 the fall of prices was from 94s. to 43s. a quarter—a fall quite sufficient to ruin all engaged, whether in its production or its purchase.* In consequence of that depression, both the agriculturist and the corn-dealer

* Viz.:—

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1817, | 94s. | 1820, | 65s. 10d. |
| 1818, | 83s. 8d. | 1821, | 54s. 3d. |
| 1819, | 72s. 9d. | 1822, | 43s. 3d. |

—*Parl. Deb.*, xv. 325.

It never occurred to Mr Whitmore that the Bill of 1819 had anything to do with this great fall, or that of 1822 in restoring prices, which in the three following years stood thus:—

| | |
|---|---|
| 1823, | 52s. |
| 1824, | 64s. 3d. |
| 1825, | 63s. |

—TOOKE *On Prices*, ii. 390.

were constant losers. Corn in bond can now be purchased at from 20s. to 30s., while that in the market brings 50s. or 60s. It is evident, from these prices, that no man in his senses will engage in the corn trade under its present restrictions; and if the capital now engaged in that traffic is either destroyed or diverted into other channels, what resource will remain to the country in those seasons of periodical scarcity which must always, in this climate, be looked for? As matters now stand, a single bad season might bring us, without the possibility of relief, to the very borders of famine.

36. Concluded.

"The extremely small quantity of foreign wheat imported, being only 12,577,000 quarters in twenty years, or about 600,000 quarters a-year, proves how little danger there is to apprehend any inordinate supply from foreign countries.* The importation, it is to be recollected, has been thus small, though the average price of corn during the period was 84s. 6d., and though until 1815 there was, in reality, no obstruction to the importation of foreign grain. It may safely be concluded, therefore, that, with prices from 55s. to 60s., the importation of wheat will never exceed 400,000 quarters. Mr Jacob has stated that a duty of 10 or 12 per cent would stop the importation of wheat altogether, even though the price were from 60s. to 64s. The cost of bringing

* Wheat Imported into Great Britain from Foreign Ports.

| Years. | Quarters. | Years. | Quarters. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1800, | 1,263,771 | 1811, | 188,563 |
| 1801, | 1,424,241 | 1812, | 129,867 |
| 1802, | 538,144 | 1813, | 341,846 |
| 1803, | 312,458 | 1814, | 626,745 |
| 1804, | 391,068 | 1815, | 194,931 |
| 1805, | 836,747 | 1816, | 210,860 |
| 1806, | 207,879 | 1817, | 1,030,829 |
| 1807, | 359,835 | 1818, | 1,586,030 |
| 1808, | 41,592 | 1819, | 471,607 |
| 1809, | 387,863 | 1820, | 591,731 |
| 1810, | 1,439,615 | | |
| In all, | | | 12,577,029 quarters. |
| Average, | | | 598,906 " |
| Average price, | | | 84s. 6d. |

—*Parl. Deb.*, xv. 329.

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a quarter of wheat from Poland to this country is 19s., which of itself fully compensates the difference of prices in labour, and affords an ample protection to the British agriculturist. On the other hand, if they persisted in their present course for some time longer, it required no great penetration to see that, on the first succession of bad seasons, we shall be involved in the most frightful calamities."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xv. 334, 336.

37. Answer by Sir Francis Burdett.

On the other hand, it was contended, in a most able speech by Sir Francis Burdett, who took an unexpected part on this question: "I shall vote for the motion to go into inquiry, but from very different motives from those from which it is brought forward. I am convinced that the particular interests of the landholder and the general interests of the country are the same, and that they do not consist in that which the motion contemplates. The welfare of society is best promoted, not by employing a great number of hands to produce a comparatively small surplus for the use of the other classes of society, but by creating a large surplus by the skilful and well-directed labour of a few. The great and striking proof of the prosperity of the country is comprised in the fact, that, with the small number of hands employed in agriculture, not exceeding a third of the whole, they raise enough to maintain themselves and all the rest in prosperity and abundance; for such, notwithstanding partial and passing visitations, is the general condition of the people of this country. The result of the labours of the agriculturist exhibits a spectacle not equalled in any other country in the world, that a third of the inhabitants raise food for double their own numbers besides themselves—a state of things quite unexampled, and which is the real cause of our acknowledged superiority in commerce and manufactures, as well as in the power of capital, over any other nation.

"Look at France. Four-fifths of the entire population, which amounts in all to thirty millions, is employed

in agriculture, and the remainder in manufactures and other pursuits. It may be judged from this circumstance in what a wretched state the agriculture of that country must be, and how inferior to that of this country. The infinite subdivision of landed property, and the consequent poverty of the cultivators, is the cause of this state of things in both interests; for how can the manufacturers be prosperous if their customers in the country are in a state of destitution, or the cultivators be affluent if they have not a ready market in towns for their produce? Nothing can be clearer than that there is, and ever must be, only one interest between the manufacturers and the farmers, for they mutually depend on each other for the disposal of their produce. The only reason why England has so large a body of manufacturers, the only reason why she is able to support them, is that her agriculturists produce, with so little labour, comparatively speaking, so much more than is needed for their own consumption. The more the agriculturist's labour produces, the more he has to sell to the manufacturer; the less exertion the manufacturer has to lay out upon his commodity, the more the agriculturist receives in exchange.

38. Continued.

"It is said, on the other side, 'Give the manufacturer cheap bread, and he will give you cheap commodities; but those who reason thus do not consider that the words 'cheap' and 'dear' are relative terms, and, applied in either way, become convertible. To say that manufactures are dear, is to say that corn is cheap, and *vice versâ*. Both trades might flourish; the greater and easier production of both was an advantage to both; but that the produce of both should be dear when they came to mutual exchange is impossible. Those who are disposed to endanger the safety of agricultural property are shortsighted in their views of their own advantage, since they stop the source from which their own chief means of existence are derived. Without the agricultural pro-

39. Continued.

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duce, it would be impossible for the manufacturer to live; and the same may be said of the merchant, the lawyer, the men of literature and science, who are the ornament of society, and all other classes. It is of no consequence to the working people what is the price of corn, provided their wages keep the same level; and the only effect of the low price of corn, for which the manufacturers so strenuously contend, will be low profits to the agricultural classes, and with them diminished purchases from, and low wages to, the manufacturing.

40. Concluded.

"Already the truth of these principles has become apparent. From Glasgow, Manchester, Bradford, Paisley, we hear of nothing but 'stagnation in trade,' and 'heavy low prices;' complaints which come with a very bad grace from those who are using every endeavour to bring about 'a heavy low price' in corn. The price of corn, as of every other article of commerce, measured in money, depends, on an average of years, entirely on the plenty or scarcity of the currency; but the real value—that is, the exchangeable value, as measured by other commodities—depends upon an entirely different thing, viz., the quantity which the country had of surplus produce. The manufacturers complain of the high price of corn; but would the free trade in grain, for which they contend, better their condition, if their wages fell in the same proportion? If free trade in grain is to be admitted, there must be free trade in everything else; but how is this possible, when the half of our public income, and the whole funds for payment of the interest of the national debt, are derived from duties on imported articles? And if such duties must be maintained—that is, the industry employed in their production be protected—what is repealing the Corn Laws but singling out one great interest in the country for destruction, while the others are preserved and cherished? The Corn Laws may be, and probably are, an evil; but they arise necessarily from our social position: repeal all import duties, or none."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xv. 364, 368; Ann. Reg. 1826, 46, 48.

Ministers resisted the motion, not on its general merits, but on the inconvenience of going into such a general question, involving such weighty interests, at an advanced period of the session, and on the eve of a general election. The motion to go into a committee at that time accordingly was lost by a very large majority, the numbers being 215 to 81. The Government, however, pledged themselves to go into the whole question early next session; and as the distress of the manufacturing classes, owing to the sudden contraction of the currency, continued without mitigation, and alarming riots had taken place in several districts, particularly Lancashire, in which power-looms to a great extent were destroyed, and which were not suppressed without loss of life, it was deemed indispensable to adopt some measures calculated to afford immediate relief. With this view a bill was introduced, and carried by 214 to 82, allowing wheat to the extent of 500,000 quarters to be introduced at a duty of 10s. a quarter, and inferior grains at lower duties; and another, empowering Government during the recess to admit foreign grain during a limited time and at a limited duty, was also, as a temporary measure, though with great difficulty, carried through both Houses. Surprise was expressed by many members that last year, when the price of corn was 8s. a quarter higher than at present, Ministers asked for no such powers; but the reason was obvious—there were then high prices and no distress. The monetary crisis and contraction of the currency had since intervened, and they invariably begat the cry for cheap bread, in ignorance of the fact that, if got, it is the very way to prolong and extend the suffering.[1]

41. Division on the question, and interim admission of foreign grain.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1826, 51, 54; Parl. Deb. xv. 954, 965, 988.

SIR FRANCIS BURDETT, who spoke so ably on, and took so unexpected a view of this question, was a very remarkable man, whose character deserves to be drawn, not only from the prominent part which, during a long parliamentary career, he took in public affairs, but from his being, as it were, the type of a class of men peculiar to England at

42. Character of Sir Francis Burdett.

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that period, and which since has become well-nigh extinct. Descended from an ancient family, and inheriting a noble estate, he was a favourable example of the old English country gentleman. Passionately fond of field sports, his time was divided between hunting and politics. A commanding figure, a ready flow of language, and powerful elocution, gave him that power over his auditory which such qualities seldom fail to confer; and as his principles were extreme on the popular side, he was for a quarter of a century the idol of the democratic party. His ample estates lay in Derbyshire; but he was too great a favourite with the populace to be permitted to come in quietly for a county, and "England's pride and Westminster's glory" stood forward as the champion of that great democratic constituency which he long represented in Parliament. He vehemently opposed the Castlereagh administration, and contended for Parliamentary Reform, Catholic Emancipation, a reduction of expenditure, and all the objects which the popular party at that time had at heart. But he was far from being the slave of the republicans. He inherited from his Norman ancestors all their independent spirit, and was equally inclined to resist oppression when it appeared in the encroachments of a popular assembly as in the stretches of arbitrary power. His long lead of democratic constituencies had rendered him somewhat fond of theatrical effect; and when his house was forced open, under the Speaker's warrant, in 1810, for a libel on the House of Commons, and he was conducted to the Tower, he was found quietly seated in his library hearing his son translate *Magna Charta*. His powers of eloquence were of the very highest order; second to none in the House of Commons in the days of Pitt and Fox, of Brougham and Canning. The preceding skeleton of his speech proves that he was capable of mastering the most intricate questions of political economy. His extreme political principles kept him at a distance from power during his long parliamentary career, but his

talents were always respected, his capacity dreaded, by his political opponents; and in his later years, when popular principles were in the ascendant, he gave many unequivocal proofs, that, though willing to be the leader, he would not condescend to be the slave of the people.



43. Excessive heat and drought of Great Britain in 1826.

The year 1826 was long remembered in Great Britain from the excessive drought which everywhere prevailed, and the extraordinary heat with which it was accompanied. The dry weather began early in June, and continued almost without intermission till the end of October, during the greater part of which time the thermometer in the shade was above 80°. It was the climate of the West Indies, without its moisture or sea-breezes. The consequences were remarkable and curious in the extreme; they clearly demonstrated that a long succession of such seasons would change the character, and with it the destinies of the British people. Harvest began in the south of England in the beginning of July; it was general over the whole island in the first week of August.* The wheat crops did not suffer materially from this long drought. It was not likely that a vegetable which comes to perfection under the sun of Egypt, should wither under his rays, however ardent, in Great Britain. But the oats were so deficient that in the beginning of September they were 30s. the quarter, or double the usual price. The deer perished of thirst in the parks, the cattle in the fields. The green crops failed entirely; the grass was everywhere burned up, the hay harvest was almost nothing; and the price of fodder, and all kinds of food for animals, rose to such a degree in the succeeding winter, that it was evident that a succession of such seasons would confine the use of animal food to the most wealthy classes of the community.

* The Author saw a field of wheat cut down on the banks of the Esk, six miles to the south of Edinburgh, on the 11th July. This is fully a month earlier than what is reckoned an early season, and about the season of harvest in Spain and Italy.

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Who can calculate the effect of such a change in unbracing the nerves, and lessening the courage and energy of the great body of the British people? And this shows how insensible we are to the greatest blessings of our social and physical situation. We lament our fogs and our rains, and envy the blue skies and cloudless sun of Italy, forgetting that it is these fogs and rains, and the mild and humid winters with which they are accompanied, which have provided the food for man by which his physical and mental energies are developed in the highest degree, and that but for them the Anglo-Saxon race, instead of performing its destined mission to "replenish the earth and subdue it," would have been pining in hopeless subjection to the Scythian, like the Ryots of Hindostan or the Fellahs of Egypt.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1826, 173.

44. Dissolution of Parliament, and elections.

The parliamentary session terminated on 31st May, and next day the House of Commons was dissolved by royal proclamation. The elections were conducted without heat or animosity: the measures of Government had become so liberal and conciliatory that the Opposition had hardly a topic left whereon to declaim. Even the Corn Laws, the last stronghold of the aristocracy, had been partially yielded to the demands of the people, and this concession begat the hope of still farther relaxation. The Catholic question was the principal topic on the hustings, and Mr Canning and the Duke of York were the acknowledged leaders of the opposite parties. The future prime-minister and the heir-apparent to the throne divided the affections of the thinking and religious portion of the community, and each of the two parties had a worthy leader to follow. To neither of these men had Providence allotted a long span of existence; ere two years had expired they were both gathered to their fathers. The anti-Catholic party, however, upon the whole, decidedly gained by the elections. Two candidates in Yorkshire were elected on the ground of opposing the Catholics.[2] Lord John Russell was defeated in

[2] Ann. Reg. 1826, 170, 171; Martineau, i. 404, 405.

Huntingdonshire, and the Bedford interest generally appeared to be waning, from the vigour of the Protestant party. The elections in Great Britain, however, passed over without riots; and they were memorable for one circumstance, heretofore unknown in England, that several persons going to them were struck down on the road by *coup de soleil*, and that it was often impossible to get water for the horses engaged in transporting them.

45. General interference of the priests in the Irish elections.

In Ireland, the elections gave token of a more alarming spirit, and augured unequivocally an approaching storm—for the priests, for the first time, took an active part in the contests. Mr Sheehan said to them, "Here are the natural enemies of your country; and here are your priests, who wait on the bed of sickness, and we, your friends alike in prosperity or woe—follow us or them." Mr Shiel afterwards said, "The whole body of the peasantry have risen up in a tumultuous revolt against their landlords. I avow that this extraordinary political phenomenon is, to a great extent, the result of the interposition of the clergy, whose influence has been brought into full and unrestrained activity." Several elections in Ireland were gained to the Catholic cause by this new and powerful religious co-operation, but not so many as were lost in England from the zeal of the opposite party. The great majority in the two islands were arrayed under opposite banners, and stood in open hostility to each other—an ominous circumstance, which it was evident Catholic emancipation would not remove, and which augured ill for the peace of the empire in future times.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1826, 171, 174.

46. Opening of the new Parliament. Nov. 14.

The next session of Parliament was opened on the 14th November, in consequence of the necessity of providing an immediate remedy to the high price of oats. The rise in their price had been so rapid, in consequence of the drought of the summer, that the averages taken by the existing law, at the prices of the six weeks preceding, would not rise soon enough to let in the requisite supplies immediately from abroad, and partial famine might be the consequence.

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Parliament was assembled accordingly, and the general distress which prevailed formed a leading feature in the royal speech. "I have deeply sympathised," said his Majesty, "with the sufferings which, for some time past, have been so severely felt by the manufacturing class, and contemplated with satisfaction the exemplary patience with which they have been borne. The depression under which the trade and manufactures of the country have been labouring, have abated more slowly than I thought myself warranted in anticipating; but I retain a firm expectation that this abatement will be progressive, and that the time is not far distant when, under the blessing of Divine Providence, the commerce and industry of the United Kingdom will have resumed their wonted activity."[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1826, 175, 177.

47. Temporary relaxation of the Corn Laws.

The measure proposed by Government to meet the existing crisis was an act of Parliament sanctioning an Order in Council, which had been issued on the 15th September preceding, authorising the importation of foreign grain, at a duty of 2s. a quarter, till the 15th February, when the next averages might be struck. This measure, being founded in obvious necessity, the price of oats having risen to 30s. a quarter, met with general concurrence —the agricultural party only protesting that their acquiescence in it was not to be regarded as any abandonment of their general principles, but a concession only to the overbearing necessities of the moment; the adoption of such *temporary* relief, so far from a deviation from, being strictly in harmony with the spirit of the existing Corn Laws.[2]

[2] Ann. Reg. 1826, 179, 181; Parl. Deb. xvi. 126, 130.

48. King's message regarding Portugal.

Before the House of Commons, however, had sat many weeks, a topic of a far more momentous and exciting kind was brought before it, which, more than the rise in the price of oats, had been the real cause of its early convocation. On the 11th December, a message was brought from the King to both Houses of Parliament, which stated, in substance, that "an earnest application had been

received by his Majesty from the Princess-Regent of Portugal, claiming, in virtue of the ancient obligations of alliance and amity subsisting between his Majesty and the Crown of Portugal, his Majesty's aid against a hostile aggression from Spain; that repeated assurances had been given by the King of France that he would neither commit, nor allow to be committed, any hostile act on the realm of Portugal; but that, notwithstanding these assurances, hostile inroads into the territory of Portugal have been concerted in Spain, and executed under the eyes of the Spanish authorities, by Portuguese regiments, which had deserted into Spain, and which the Spanish government had repeatedly and solemnly engaged to disarm and disperse." This message took both Houses of Parliament, the country, and the world, entirely by surprise. No one had the slightest idea that any such events, so obviously ominous to the peace of Europe, were in progress; and the excitement thence arising throughout Europe was proportionally greater.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1826, 192; Parl. Deb. xvi. 334, 335.

49. How this had come to pass.

To understand how this came about, and how the rival powers of England and France, and the principles of constitutional and despotic government, were thus openly brought into collision, it is only necessary to recollect that, though Spain had undergone a counter-revolution, in Portugal a constitutional monarchy still existed, under the sway of the infant daughter of the King of Brazil, the laws of which provided that its crown should never be united to that of Portugal. The government of Portugal, remodelled, as already mentioned, after the counter-revolution of 1823,[2] was a constitutional one; but so moderate and tempered that it had excited no enthusiasm in the liberal party, either there or elsewhere. Such as it was, however, it was the object of great jealousy both to the Spanish government and the Royalist party in Portugal; and a civil war having arisen, as will be more fully narrated in the account of the transactions of the Peninsula, Don Miguel, the King of Brazil's younger brother, had been

[2] Ante, c. xii. § 98.

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proclaimed king; and Portuguese regiments in the Royalist interest having been driven into Spain, they were there received with open arms, equipped afresh, and led back to maintain the cause of absolutism in the Portuguese dominions.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1826, 191.

50. Mr Canning's speech on the subject in the House of Commons.

In introducing this subject to the House of Commons, Mr Canning, after narrating the treaties, offensive and defensive, between Great Britain and Portugal in 1661, 1703, and 1815, said: "This being the state of our relations with Portugal, when the Regency of that country, in apprehension of the coming storm, called on Great Britain for assistance, the only question we had to consider was, whether the *casus fœderis* had arisen. In our opinion it had. Bands of Portuguese rebels, armed, equipped, and trained in Spain, had crossed the Spanish frontier, carrying terror and devastation into their own country, and proclaiming sometimes the brother of the reigning sovereign of Portugal, sometimes a Spanish princess, sometimes even Ferdinand VII. of Spain, as the rightful occupant of the Portuguese throne. These rebels crossed the frontier, not at one, but at several different points—first on the province of Tras-os-Montes, and next in the south, where we on Friday received an account of the invasion of Alentejo, and the capture of Villa-Viciosa, a considerable town on the frontier. Can it be denied that these repeated and systematic attacks do not call for the interposition of this country, in virtue of the ancient treaties in behalf of its ancient ally? If a single company of Spanish soldiers had crossed the frontier in hostile array, there could not be a doubt as to the character of the invasion. Shall bodies of men, armed, clothed, and regimented by Spain, carry fire and sword into the bosom of her unoffending neighbour, and shall it be pretended that it is no invasion because these outrages have been committed by men to whom Portugal had given birth and nurture? Had Spain employed mercenaries to effect the invasion, there could not be a

doubt of its hostile character; and does it render it less so that the mercenaries in this instance are the natives of Portugal?

51. Continued.

"In some quarters it has been said that an extraordinary delay has taken place between the taking of the determination to give assistance to Portugal, and the carrying of that determination into effect. But how stands the fact? On Sunday, December 3, the Portuguese ambassador made a formal demand of assistance against a hostile aggression from Spain. Our answer was, that although we had heard rumours to that effect, yet we had not yet received such precise information as justified us in applying to Parliament. It was only on Friday that that information arrived. On Saturday his Majesty's confidential servants came to a decision—on Sunday that decision received the sanction of his Majesty—on Monday it was communicated to both Houses of Parliament—and to-day (Tuesday), at the hour on which I have the honour of addressing you, the troops of Great Britain are on their march for embarkation."

52. Continued.

"The reasons I have stated entirely satisfy my judgment that we are imperatively called on at this crisis to render the aid to which we are bound by treaty to Portugal. Nothing short of a point of national faith or honour would justify me, at the present moment, in anything that approximates even to war. Let it not be supposed from this that I dread war in a good cause—and in no other cause may it ever be the lot of this country to engage. I dread it upon other grounds. I dread it from an apprehension of the tremendous consequences which might arise from any hostilities in which we might now be engaged. Some years ago, on occasion of the invasion of Spain by France, I said that the next war that would arise in Europe would be a war, not of nations, but of opinions, and that it was by neutrality alone that we could maintain the balance between them. Not four years have elapsed, and already my anticipa-

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tions are realised! It is a war of opinion that Spain is now waging against Portugal, and who will venture to foretell to what consequences such a war may lead? It is the contemplation of the new power which will rise up in any future war that fills me with apprehension. It is one thing to have a giant's strength, but it would be another to use it like a giant.

53. Concluded.

"The consciousness of such strength is undoubtedly a source of confidence and security, but in the situation in which the country now stands, our business is not to seek opportunities of displaying it, but to content ourselves with letting the professors of violent and exaggerated opinions on both sides feel that it is not for their interest to convert an umpire into an adversary. The situation of England, amidst the struggle of political opinions which agitates more or less sensibly different countries of the world, may be compared to that of the ruler of the winds as described by the poet—

——— "Celsa sedet Æolus arce,
Sceptra tenens; mollitque animos et temperat iras;
Ni faciat, maria ac terras cœlumque profundum,
Quippe ferant rapidi secum, verrantque per auras."

The consequence of letting loose the passions, at present chained and confined, would be to produce a scene of desolation which no man can contemplate without horror, and I should not sleep easy on my couch if I were conscious that I had contributed to accelerate it by a single moment. This is the reason why I dread the recurrence of hostilities in any part of Europe, why I would forbear long on any point which did not taint the national honour ere I let slip the dogs of war, the leash of which we hold in our hands, not knowing whom they may reach, or how far their ravages may be carried. Such is the love of peace which the British government acknowledges, and such the necessity for peace which the circumstances of the world inculcate. Let us fly to the aid of Portugal, because it is our duty to do so; and let

us cease our interference when that duty ends. We go to Portugal not to rule, not to dictate, not to prescribe constitutions, but to defend and preserve the independence of an ally. We go to plant the standard of England on the well-known heights of Lisbon. Where that standard is planted, foreign dominion shall not come."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb xvi. 356, 369; Ann. Reg. 1826, 197, 198.

54. Vast effect of this speech, and the expedition sets out for Lisbon.

Never, perhaps, did a speech delivered in the British House of Commons produce such an effect as this did, which was enhanced by his still more eloquent reply, given in a former volume, in reference to the French invasion of Spain,[2] where he said he had called a new world into existence to redress the balance of the old. The effect was electrical, both upon the House and the country. All hearts were moved, all heads swept away by it. In vain Mr Hume, and one or two others of the partisans of economy, urged the impolicy of thus hurrying into a war of which we could neither foresee the duration nor calculate the expense. His objections were overruled. Such were the murmurs of the House that he could scarce obtain a hearing; and his amendment, "that the House be called over this day week," found only four supporters. Both Houses, by overwhelming majorities, supported the Government. The troops were embarked with such expedition that, though they only received their orders to march on December 11, on Christmas day they began to land in Lisbon, amidst the cheers of the multitude, in whom the well-known uniforms inspired confidence. Six thousand men were soon established there, and this vigorous demonstration, as is often the case, averted war by proving that it was not dreaded. The incursions from Spain ceased, the frontier was no longer disquieted; and France, which was the real principal in the affair, disavowed a proceeding which it was no longer prudent to acknowledge.[3] No hostilities ensued. Before eighteen months had expired the troops had all returned to England, without having

[2] Ante, c. xii. §§ 102, 103.

[3] Ann. Reg. 1826, 202, 205; Parl. Deb. xvi. 370, 398.

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fired a shot; and this affair passed over with no other result but that of rendering Mr Canning the idol of the liberal party throughout the world, and demonstrating to the astonished nations the elements of war which, amidst all their pacific interests, slumbered in the breasts of the British people.

55. Reflections on this point.

There can be no doubt that Mr Canning's decision on this occasion was both wise and honourable. There could have been nothing more derogatory to British honour, or in the end subversive of British interests, than to have permitted French interest and domination to extend over the whole Peninsula—the very thing which it had been the object of all the campaigns of Marlborough and Wellington to prevent. The entire success of the demonstration leaves no doubt as to its wisdom. But it is a curious proof of the manner in which party influences or opposite interests can blind even the clearest intellects, that neither Mr Canning, nor his numerous and enthusiastic supporters in the House of Commons or the country, saw that the principles on which his intervention in *defence* of Portugal were based, were directly the reverse, and afforded the strongest condemnation of those on which his own previous conduct in regard to South America had been founded. If it was right of him, as it unquestionably was, to put forth the strength of England to resist the incursions of armed bands, raised and equipped in Spain to effect a revolution in Portugal—what shall we say to his own conduct in permitting bands of adventurers, armed and equipped in England, to sail from the Thames, with Tower muskets in their hands, to revolutionise South America? Intervention is always an odious and dangerous thing, and only the more dangerous when it invokes for its cover a sacred name, a heart-stirring principle; but it is not less so in the hands of the Liberals than in those of the Conservatives, when it sets forth from the Thames, in the name of freedom, to desolate South America, than when it starts from St

Petersburg, in the name of religion, to establish Muscovite domination at Constantinople. But so utterly blind are men to the plainest truths where their interests or passions are concerned, that the same individuals who had most cordially applauded English intervention in South America, the source of unnumbered woes to humanity, were now most vehement in their condemnation of Spanish intervention in Portugal in favour of absolutism; and it was hard to say whether the cheers of the House of Commons were loudest when Mr Canning announced, in his opening speech, the departure of the British troops for the well-known heights of Lisbon, where foreign dominion shall not prevail, or on his reply, when he declared that when France made one aggression on Spain he determined that England should make another, and that "he called the new world into existence to redress the balance of the old."

56. Improved state of the country in the beginning of 1827.

This warlike interlude interrupted only for a very short period the fixed attention of the British people to objects of domestic interest. These soon resumed their accustomed course, and entirely absorbed general thought. The improvement of the country during the course of the winter of 1826-7, though slow, was steady: if the cheering symptoms of general prosperity had not yet returned, those of universal suffering had sensibly abated. There were no longer any failures of banks, and no call for additional public measures to restore commercial confidence. Those already adopted had gone far to assuage the general suffering; a crisis which had been brought on by a sudden and unexpected contraction of the currency in the midst of the greatest and most pressing money engagements, had been successfully arrested by the measures forced upon the Government, in opposition to their strongest prepossessions, by the public necessities. The issue of nine millions of additional Bank of England notes in the last three weeks of 1825 had stopped the panic; the guaranteeing by Government of loans to the extent of

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three millions more by the Bank had sensibly arrested its effects. Wages, indeed, were still low—in many branches of industry distressingly so—but employment was general; and though the failure of the home market was still severely felt, yet foreign ones had generally revived, and the happy prospect of the continuance of general peace enabled the merchants to begin again, though as yet with fear and trembling, their renovating speculations.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1827, 1, 2.

57. Death of the Duke of York. Jan. 5, 1827.

Two domestic events occurred in the early part of this year, attended with important consequences, and which, in the critical state and equal balance of parties at that period in the British empire, were attended with lasting effects. The first of these was the death of the Duke of York, who expired on the 5th January. The health of the illustrious Prince had been long declining, though no immediate danger was apprehended; but during the last six months the symptoms had assumed the character of decided dropsy, which, though for some time baffled by the skill of his physicians, assumed, in December 1826, the most alarming symptoms. The increase of his bodily sufferings, however, and the near approach of death, with which he was well acquainted, could not for a moment render him insensible to the call of patriotism. He continued to the very last to discharge all his important duties as Commander-in-Chief; and when grievously oppressed by breathlessness, and supported by pillows in bed, he personally gave the whole orders, and made the entire arrangements for the small but brilliant expedition which left the British shores in the middle of December, and did such service to the interests of humanity by preserving the peace of Europe, when violently threatened in the close of 1826. On the 28th December the sacrament was administered to him, along with his sister the Princess Sophia, by the hands of the Bishop of London;[2] on the next day he received the parting visit of his royal

[2] Ann. Reg. 1827, 2, 3; Martineau, i. 428.

brother; and on the 5th January he expired, in the sixty-fourth year of his age.

58. His character.

The character of the Duke of York, as of all persons who have taken a decided part in great political questions which divided society, has been variously drawn by writers of different parties; but it is possible at this distance of time to represent it in its true colours, without intemperate bias on either side. By one party he is represented as a firm patriot, a sincere politician, the intrepid assertor of the principles which had placed his family on the throne; by another, as an obstinate bigot, who wilfully shut his eyes to the lights of the age, and obstructed, as long as he had the power, the greatest social amelioration in the British empire. He was in reality neither so great a man as his panegyrists represent, nor so reprehensible as his detractors assert. He was an honest, kind-hearted, intrepid Prince, without any extensive reach of vision, but with a clear perception of his duty within the limits over which it extended, and the resolute will which, having once discerned, never hesitated to discharge it. Possessed of good abilities, he had exhibited early in life, in the campaign in Flanders, the decision and daring which form such material elements in the character of a great general; and when subsequently raised to the important situation of Commander-in-Chief, which he held for thirty-two years, the services he rendered to the army were such that he may be truly said to have laid the foundation of the edifice of which Wellington raised the superstructure.

59. Continued.

Indefatigable in his attention to business, zealous in the discharge of duty, easy of access, affable in manner, he won the hearts of the officers by the courtesy of his demeanour, the straightforwardness of his conduct, and the equity of his distribution of patronage; while he endeared himself to the private soldiers by his unwearied attention to their interests, and the vast improvements which he

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introduced both in their material comforts and moral training. With truth he said, on his death-bed, that if the condition of the first English expedition, which landed at Ostend in 1794, were compared with that which he had recently despatched to Lisbon, it would not be believed that they belonged to the same age or nation. Mr Peel said, in moving an address of condolence to the King on the death of his brother, that he did not believe that, during the ten thousand days he had held his exalted situation, there had been one on which he had not devoted some time to its duties. It was by his long and judicious efforts that the numerous abuses existing in the army at his entry on office were rooted out, promotion put on a better footing, the station of the soldier elevated, and that noble body of men created, who carried the English standards in triumph to Paris, Delhi, and Nankin. That he was not an immaculate character, is only to say that he was a child of Adam. Liberal even to profusion in private life, his attention was so incessantly absorbed by the cares of his office, that he allowed his affairs to fall into confusion, and he left nothing but the memory of his great services behind him. His irregularities of another kind, the frequent accompaniment of exalted rank and an ardent disposition, were fastened on, during one memorable investigation, by the combined forces of scandal and faction, with such intensity as rendered his temporary retirement from office a matter of necessity. But he was soon restored to it with the unanimous approbation of the nation, which, however frequently overborne for a time by the vehemence of party or the clamour of the press, is rarely in the end unjust in the estimate of private character, or ungrateful for public services. His decided and manly declaration of his sentiments on Catholic emancipation, shortly before his death, exposed him again to unbounded obloquy at the time; but experience has long since stilled that clamour, and suggested a doubt whether those who are reckoned, during their life,[1] to have been

[1] Ann. Reg. 1827, 7.

behind the age, were not sometimes in reality in advance of it.

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60. Illness and retirement of Lord Liverpool.

The Duke of York was soon followed to the grave by another public man, who had long held a prominent place in the councils of the country. Lord Liverpool, who since 1812 had been prime-minister, had himself moved the address of condolence to the King on his brother's death in the beginning of February, and had announced that he would on the 15th introduce the intended alteration on the Corn Laws in the House of Peers, when he was suddenly seized with a paralytic attack, which, though not at the time fatal, was of such severity as to render his retention of office impossible. He tendered his resignation to his Majesty as soon as returning consciousness, six weeks after, enabled him to do so; and his situation was such as to give the Sovereign no alternative but to accept it. During the long interval the nation remained without a prime-minister.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1827, 90, 91; Twiss's Life of Eldon, ii. 583, 584.

61. His character, and its adaptation to his times.

Lord Liverpool was not a man of striking abilities, and still less of decision of character; but on that very account he was peculiarly fitted for the situation which he so long held. The period during which he was prime-minister was, at least during its last twelve years, essentially one of transition. He came into office when the crisis of the war was over, and he had only to reap the fruits of the courage and capacity of his predecessors. His long reign occurred when difficulties of another kind were accumulating round the throne, when new ideas were fermenting in the nation, when extended power was loudly demanded by the people, and when whole classes of society, enriched by industry and peace, were prosecuting their objects of separate aggrandisement. The utopian dream of the interests of all classes being identical, was then fast giving way to the stern reality of the more powerful enriching itself at the expense of the weaker. The opposite parties at that period were so nearly balanced, that if he had acted with decision, and thrown himself, without

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reserve, into the arms of either party, he would have inevitably brought on a collision, which would have certainly proved fatal to his administration, probably to the peace and liberties of the country. The Conservatives were too firmly intrenched in power, and rested too strongly on ancient traditions, to relinquish it without a struggle; the Liberals too aspiring, and too sensible of their growing ascendancy, to shrink from the encounter. Lord Liverpool's whole reign was a long preparation on either part for the strife which all foresaw was approaching; and his great skill and prudence in postponing the period of collision, was proved by the rapidity with which it ensued when he was removed by the stroke of fate from the helm.

62. Continued.

Prudent, sagacious, and reflecting, carefully watching the signs of the times, and still more carefully shunning those which portended danger, his great object was to steer the vessel of the state in present safety through the shoals by which it was surrounded. His skill consisted in his discernment of the means by which this was to be brought about, and the characters by whose agency it was to be effected. In these respects, he had very great merit, if merit it can be called, which consists in adjourning danger, not averting it, and purchasing present tranquillity by postponing the conflict to future times. He clearly discerned where the ruling party on every great question was to be found, and ranged himself with the dominant side; holding out, at the same time, the olive branch to the minority, by conceding to them lesser, but still material objects of ambition. Thus, while he stood firm with the then ruling Conservative majority in the nation on the great questions of Catholic emancipation and reform in Parliament, he cordially joined the Liberals on the minor, but still important, points of free trade, a contracted currency, and the reciprocity system, which were so many outworks, the possession of which enabled them to breach the body of the place. By standing firm on the first, he retained the confidence of his old Conservative friends;

by yielding on the last, he awakened the hopes and disarmed the hostility of his new Liberal supporters.

63. Concluded.

He brought Mr Canning and Mr Huskisson into the Cabinet, and had influence enough to make them act along with Lord Eldon and the Duke of Wellington—a perilous conjunction, as much fraught with future danger as it was with present tranquillity. His greatest failing was a constitutional nervousness, which made him, as he himself said, never on one day during which he held office break the seals of a heap of letters without a feeling of apprehension; his greatest error the cordial support which he gave to the measure for the contraction of the currency, urged upon him by the Liberal portion of the Cabinet, and supported by so great a majority in both Houses of Parliament. But that was the error of the age in which he lived, and it would be unjust to visit upon him the responsibility shared by him with all the strongest heads in the realm. He was disinterested and just in the extreme in the administration of Government; unostentatious and conciliatory in private life; his mind was stored with a vast variety of facts on every important question, which he brought out with equal judgment and skill in debate; and he left behind him the reputation of being, if not the greatest, certainly the most prudent and fortunate Minister, that ever conducted the affairs of Great Britain.

64. Difficulty in the choice of his successor, and Mr Canning's appointment.

Lord Liverpool's retirement from the direction of the Government brought the schism which had long existed in the Cabinet prominently into their own view, before the dissension was yet fully known to the country. The King was under the necessity of appointing a successor; and the question was, who was to be the new prime-minister? The temporising system could no longer be carried on; the selection must be made; the leader of the Cabinet could only be taken from one or other of the parties into which it was divided, and the appointment would at once confer or indicate the superiority. The

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King, for many reasons, was averse to Mr Canning, who had on several occasions exhibited symptoms of an ambitious, intriguing spirit, little suited for a prime-minister, and had rendered himself personally obnoxious to the Sovereign, by the prominent part he had taken as an adviser of Queen Caroline. But the circumstances left him no alternative. Mr Canning was the leader of the House of Commons, and the most popular minister who, since the days of Chatham, had directed the foreign affairs of the country; while the anti-Catholic party in the Cabinet did not contain any man qualified to be placed at its head. Lord Eldon was disqualified by age, the Duke of Wellington by his military habits, and Mr Peel was as yet too young for such a situation. In these circumstances, the King, though most reluctantly, sent for Mr Canning, with whom he had a long conference, which, at first, led to no definite result. But Mr Peel, who also was consulted, gave it as his opinion that an anti-Catholic Ministry could not be formed; and the issue was, that, after a fortnight of anxious suspense and difficulty, the King intrusted Mr Canning with the formation of a Ministry; and the Duke of Wellington, Mr Peel, Lord Eldon, Lord Bathurst, Lord Westmoreland, and Lord Melville, resigned.[1]

March 27.

April 10.

[1] Life of Canning, 359; Life of Eldon, ii. 588, 591, 604; Ann. Reg. 1827, 93, 105.

65. What made his Tory colleagues resign?

In taking this decided step, the great Tory lords were not so much actuated by political differences as by personal feeling. It was not that they dreaded Catholic emancipation, or the placing England in the vanguard of the liberal powers of Europe: their feeling was, that they had been supplanted by a political adventurer—a man of genius, indeed, and eloquence, but without family connections, and who had raised himself, independent of aristocratic support, to the highest position in the State. They were mortified at the thought of power having slipped from the old influences; they felt the jealousy which rank invariably does of genius, when it is not entirely subservient to its wishes. They dreaded the ascendancy of a

rival power. On the other hand, Mr Canning, anticipating the defection of his Tory colleagues, had made overtures to the Liberal chiefs, and secret communications had passed between him and Sir Robert Wilson and Mr Brougham. All was jealousy and commotion; the female political coteries were in incessant activity; party spirit had never run so high; and the rancour of the rival leaders at each other found vent in bitter taunts and reproaches.* The Whig peers were in secret not less exasperated at the aspiring commoner, who threatened to shake the long-established dominion of their order, than the Tory; and Earl Grey's hostility, in particular, exhaled in a powerful and sarcastic speech against Mr Canning in the House of Peers, which made a great sensation at the time, and contributed not a little, by pointing out the inconsistencies of his public career, to diminish his reputation in the country.

66. Composition of the new Cabinet.

In the midst of these dissensions, however, the king remained firm to his new promise; and after a considerable delay and much difficulty the new Cabinet was formed, containing, as might have been expected, a decided majority of Whigs, or persons of known liberal opinions. The most prominent changes were, that the Master of the Rolls, Sir John Copley, was made Lord Chancellor by the title of LORD LYNDHURST, in room of Lord Eldon; the Duke of Clarence, Lord High Admiral, in room of Lord Melville, who had been First Lord of the Admiralty; the Duke of Wellington was succeeded as Master-General of the Ordnance by the Marquess of Anglesea; Mr Robinson, with the title of Viscount Goderich, was made Colonial Secretary in room of Lord Bathurst; Lord Dudley, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in room of Mr Canning, appointed to the Premiership;[1] and Mr

[1] Life of Lord Eldon, ii. 604; Martineau, i. 437, 438; Ann. Reg. 1827, 100, 105.

* "The whole conversation in town is made up of abusive, bitterly abusive, talk of people about each other; all fire and flame: I have known nothing like it. I think political enmity runs higher, and waxes warmer, than I ever knew it."—Lord ELDON to Lady J. T. BANKES, April 7, 1827; *Eldon's Life*, ii. 588.

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Sturges Bourne, Secretary of State for the Home Department, in room of Mr Peel, in which important office he was, after a few weeks, succeeded by the Marquess of Lansdowne. By these appointments the Government became entirely Whig or Liberal, and the long-established dominion of the Tories, established by Mr Pitt in 1784, was subverted. *

67. Importance of these events on England's future history.

These three events, the death of the Duke of York, the appointment of Mr Canning as prime-minister, and the entire remodelling of the Cabinet on Liberal principles, succeeding one another in rapid succession in the first months of 1827, deserve to be particularly noticed as turning-points in the modern history of England, and big with vast consequences in future times. The first changed the heir-apparent to the throne, and brought forward as its immediate inheritor a prince who, with many good and amiable qualities, was by no means endowed with the strong understanding and masculine intrepidity of the Duke of York, and was influenced by a secret love of popularity, the quality of all others the most dangerous in a ruling character in stormy times. The second placed the avowed and elegant leader of the House of Commons in the situation of prime-minister, and that not as the "Great Commoner" in the days of George II., from the combined influence of aristocratic connections and personal talents, but from the last of these influences alone. The steady and intrepid opponent of Catholic

* The new Cabinet stood as follows:—

*In the Cabinet.*—Lord-Chancellor, Lord Lyndhurst; Earl of Harrowby, Lord President; Duke of Portland, Lord Privy Seal; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Lord Bexley; Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Viscount Dudley; Secretary for Colonies, Viscount Goderich; Secretary for Home Department, Mr Sturges Bourne; President of Board of Trade, Mr Huskisson; Secretary at War, Viscount Palmerston; First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Canning.

*Not in the Cabinet.*—Lord High Admiral, Duke of Clarence; Master-General of the Ordnance, Marquess of Anglesea; Lord Chamberlain, Duke of Devonshire; Master of the Horse, Duke of Leeds; Secretary for Ireland, Mr Lamb.

*Law Appointments.*—Master of the Rolls, Sir John Leach; Vice-Chancellor, Sir A. Hart; Attorney-General, Sir Jas. Scarlett; Solicitor-General, Sir N. Tindall.—*Ann. Reg.*, 1827, p. 105.

emancipation now rested in the vault of Windsor, its supporter wielded the whole power and patronage of Government; the hero of the Peninsula was in retirement, and the new premier had recently sent the British standards to Lisbon to support a liberal constitution, and boasted he had severed the dominions of an ancient ally, and "called a new world into existence to redress the balance of the old." Changes so vast could not fail to exercise a powerful influence on the course of events in future times; and it was the greater that they were in great part themselves the result of an alteration in general opinion, and the approach of a new era in human affairs.

68. Manner in which the changes were received in Parliament.

The magnitude of the change which had taken place appeared in the most decided manner when the ministerial explanations, as usual in such cases, took place in Parliament. Both Houses were crowded to excess, both in the highest degree excited; but the excitement in the two was as different as the poles are asunder. In the Commons it was the triumph of victory; in the Peers the consternation of defeat. So clearly was this evinced, that it obliterated for a time the deep lines of party distinction, and brought the two Houses, almost as hostile bodies united under different standards, into the presence of each other. The Commons rung with acclamations when the new premier made his triumphant explanation from the head of the ministerial bench; but they were still louder, when Mr Peel from the cross benches out of office said, "They may call me illiberal and Tory; but it will be found that some of the most necessary measures of useful legislation of late years are inscribed with my name." The tide of reform had become so strong that even the avowed Tory leaders in the Lower House were fain to take credit by sailing along with it. In the House of Lords, on the other hand, the feeling of the majority was decidedly hostile to the new administration, and that not merely on the Tory benches, where it might naturally have been looked for, but among the old

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Whig nobility, who had long considered government as an appanage of their estates. The forms of that decorous assembly prevented any outward indication of excitement, but it was not felt the less strongly within; and it was hard to say whether the old Peers on both sides responded more strongly to the Duke of Wellington and Lord Eldon's explanation of their reasons for declining to hold office, or to Earl Grey's powerful and impassioned attack on the new premier. The division of the two Houses was clearly pronounced: the one presaged its approaching triumph, the other its coming downfall. A secret sense of coming change had ranged their members in unwonted combinations; and the vital distinction of interest and order had for the time superseded the old divisions of party.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xvii. 410, 411, 722, 731, May 10, 1827.

69. Character of Lord Eldon, who now retired from public life.

LORD ELDON, who resigned with his Tory colleagues on this occasion, and from his advanced years, and the semi-liberal character of all subsequent administrations, never was again called to the labours of office, was one of the most remarkable men who ever sat on the Woolsack, and, from the decided uncompromising character of his political opinions, the most exposed to party violence and misrepresentation. Indeed, so uniformly has such vituperation, for a long period, attached to every independent intrepid character on either side in politics, that its intensity may be considered as not the worst test of real merit and ability. The people can tolerate anything but independence of their wishes and commands; but they will not waste their abuse except on those they fear. The insignificant they pass over in silence. As a lawyer, Lord Eldon is now acknowledged, by all men of all parties capable of judging of the subject, to have attained the very highest eminence. He was the greatest of the many great lawyers who ever sat on the English bench. He was said at the time to be dilatory and undecided; but the first is now known to have arisen from the enormous and overwhelming mass of business with which he was

oppressed; the last is the frequent accompaniment of the most acute and penetrating intellect. Men of such mental characters often seem undecided, not because they see little, but because they see much. Everything which can be adduced on either side presents itself at once and so forcibly to their clear and far-seeing mental vision, that instant decision is impossible. Decision of character, the quality of all others the most important for success in life, often arises from the will being more powerful than the judgment; and the opposite side being disregarded, not because it cannot, but because it will not, be looked at. Witness Napoleon's obstinate perseverance in the Moscow campaign.

70. His character as a statesman.

As a political character, while there is everything to esteem so far as purity of intention, conscientiousness of disposition, and intrepidity of mind are concerned, there is less in Lord Eldon to admire without reservation. He was the very first of the steadfast class of statesmen, those who abide by the ancient land-marks, and resist as dangerous or pernicious every change from the established order of things. Such men must always be respectable, if their motives are disinterested, from the principles by which they are guided, and sometimes useful from the obstacles they oppose to hasty and ill-advised legislation; but they are as often detrimental, from the resistance they present to real improvement, and dangerous, from the vehemence which their firmness excites in the movement party. A great general is not he who never retreats, and would be cut to pieces where he stands rather than retire; but he who knows when to advance and when to recede, and prepares by cautious movements, whether to the front or rear, the means of ultimate victory. Wellington was even greater when he retired to Torres Vedras, than when he gave the signal of advance at Waterloo. It belongs to the highest class of intellect to discern the time and place for resolute resistance, and the season for judicious concession. But it is scarcely possible that this

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frame of mind can coexist with that of a great lawyer; for the latter is based on the invariable observance of, and vast acquaintance with, precedent; the former is dependent on the power to discern when it is to be discarded, and entrance afforded to new influences. In private life Lord Eldon was simple and unostentatious in his manners, kindly and affectionate in his disposition. During the quarter of a century that he held office, he made a judicious and conscientious use of the immense patronage at his disposal; and though he died rich, he had become so from the legitimate emoluments of his office, not any improper devices to increase his fortune.*

71. The Catholic Bill is rejected. March 7.

Although, however, liberal principles were thus in the ascendant in the Cabinet and the House of Commons, there was one question on which the Whigs had lost ground by the election. For the first time, for several years, the Catholic question was lost in the Lower House. The debate began on March 5, and was opened by a most powerful speech by Sir Francis Burdett. It continued three nights, and was concluded at five in the morning of the 7th, by a majority of *four against* the Catholics, the numbers being 276 to 272. The arguments were the same as those so often before urged, and of which a summary will be given in recounting the final debate on the subject. But the speech of Mr Peel on the occasion deserves to be recorded, both from the weight of the arguments it contained, and the strange contrast it presented to those adduced by him so soon after on the same subject;[1] and it was evident, from the increase in the anti-Catholic

[1] Ann. Reg. 1827, 48, 72.

* Lord Eldon has left a curious proof of the grasping disposition of applicants for situations, in which all who have had the misfortune to be intrusted with patronage will probably concur. On the eve of his retirement he thus wrote to Lady J. T. Bankes: "If I had all the livings in the kingdom vacant when I communicated my resignation (for what *since that* falls vacant I have nothing to do with), and they were cut each into three-score livings, I could not do what is asked of me, by letters received every five minutes, full of eulogies upon my virtues, all which will depart when my resignation actually takes place, and all concluding with: '*Pray give me a living before you go out.*'"—Lord ELDON to Lady J. T. BANKES, April 7, 1827; *Eldon's Life*, ii. 594.

party in the House, and the manner in which his speech was received by the country, that, under a real representation of the people of Great Britain, the Catholic question had little chance of being carried. CHAP. XXI. 1827.

Mr Peel observed on this occasion: "The reasons advanced for the emancipation of the Catholics increase my dislike to it; and I cannot admit that the great names pressed into the service stand at all in my way. Mr Pitt had always ruled his reasons for the removal of Catholic disabilities upon grounds entirely different from those now adduced. When Mr Fox proposed the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1790, a measure the same in principle as the one now proposed, Mr Pitt repudiated the change in the strongest terms which it was possible for man to use; and in 1805, he said that he would not allow, at any time, or under any circumstances, the Catholics could claim the removal of their disabilities as a matter of right. Neither can I do so; and looking on it only as a question deeply involving the public good, I find myself unable to vote for what is termed Emancipation, and compelled to say frankly that I prefer a system of exclusion to one of securities. 72. Mr Peel's speech against Catholic emancipation.

"I fairly confess that I have a distrust of the Roman Catholics. I do not find fault with the faith of any man, and I think quite as highly of a Catholic as a Protestant; but if on a man's faith there be founded a scheme of political influence, then we have a right to inquire into that scheme; and I cannot contemplate the doctrines of absolution, and confession, and indulgences, without having a strong suspicion that these doctrines are maintained for the purpose of confirming the influence which man exercises over man. What is it to me whether that authority be called spiritual or otherwise, if it is such as practically to influence man's conduct in society? Is it because religious doctrines are made subservient to worldly and political purposes that they are therefore to be excluded from the consideration of the legislature 73. Continued.

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in the discussion of the present question? On the contrary, if the authority derived from these doctrines be only the stronger on account of their being borrowed from religion, and misapplied to worldly purposes, that, in my opinion, furnishes an additional motive for closely investigating the doctrines themselves. When I find the Pope issuing bulls to the Irish Roman Catholic bishops, and such documents sent forth to four or five millions of people destitute of education, I must say that they are very apt to influence their conduct in life. When I hear, too, such doctrines ascribed to a desire to promote the pure doctrines of Christianity, I cannot help having a lurking suspicion that they are rather intended to maintain a spiritual authority, capable of being applied to temporal purposes, which is said to be extinct, but which it is evident is still existing.

74. Continued.

"I have no objection to the professors of the Roman Catholic religion as individuals; I quarrel not with their religious tenets as a matter of faith: but I am jealous of the political system which is engrafted on those tenets; and I think I have a perfect right, on the present occasion, to consider what has been the influence of that political influence in different countries. Without going back to dark and distant ages, and viewing the effect of the Catholic religion, as it exists at the present day in different countries—in some where it luxuriates in undisputed growth, in others where it is only struggling for supremacy, in a third class where it is subordinate to another and a purer system—the result of my investigation and observation is, that it is expedient to maintain in this country the mild, mitigated, and temperate predominance of the Protestant Church. It is the natural desire of every man to promote the welfare of the religious faith to which he is sincerely attached. If Roman Catholics were admitted into Parliament, what could be more natural than that they should labour to extend the influence of their religious system over

the country, and to bring it into closer connection with the Government? The consequence would be to bring the Catholic and Protestant religions into collision, in such a manner as might prove the destruction of the latter; and I consider the confusion and disorders which must prevail for ages before that event takes place as a greater evil than the event itself.

75. Continued.

"Although I believe that the admission of Catholics into Parliament and the great offices would endanger the constitution, yet, if I was satisfied that it would tranquillise Ireland, and produce all the benefits which are anticipated from it, I would sacrifice my apprehensions to the attainment of so immense a benefit. But I cannot bring my mind to believe that the removal of the disabilities would produce such a consummation. If, indeed, the friends of the Catholics proposed, after having carried this point, to make the religion of the great majority of the Irish people the religion of the state, to restore the possessions of the Church to the Catholics, and open to them the great offices of state, possibly such a line of policy might appease and tranquillise the Catholics. But this they do not say; on the contrary, they disavow any intention to attack the Established Church. But if they maintain the Protestant Church, there will still be a barrier between the two religions: the real apple of discord will remain, only you will have augmented the power of the Catholics to produce the confusion. Would not the Catholic priests exercise their spiritual authority for temporal purposes? The priests have already been lauded for exercising their influence at elections, which they have done to an extent which is utterly unjustifiable; but that is nothing to what may be expected in future, if by such interference they have the prospect of advancing, for the interests of their faith and their temporal advantage, the measures of the legislature. And this is the measure which is to tranquillise Ireland, and eradicate the poison of faction from the land.

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76. Concluded.

"The influence of some great names, of some great men, has been lately lost to the cause I support; but I never adopted my opinions upon it from deference either to high station or high ability. Keen as the feelings of regret must be with which the loss of these associates is recollected, it is still a matter of consolation to me that in the absence of these individuals I have now an opportunity of showing my adherence to those tenets which I formerly espoused—of showing that, if my opinions be unpopular, I stand by them still, when the influence and authority that may have given them currency are gone, and when it is impossible that in the mind of any human being I can stand suspected of pursuing them with any view to favour or personal aggrandisement." The honourable consistency of Mr Peel on this occasion deserves to be particularly noticed, and his sincerity cannot be doubted; for the death of the Duke of York and of Lord Liverpool had deprived the Protestant party of their chief support; and the state of the Cabinet, and probable accession of Mr Canning to its head, rendered the opinions then so manfully delivered to all appearance a very long, if not perpetual, exclusion from office.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xvi. 963, 971; Ann. Reg. 1827, 51, 55.

77. Ministerial measure on the Corn Laws.

Equal, if not superior, to the agitation excited by the discussion of this great political question, was that awakened by the Government measure on the Corn Laws, which, in pursuance of the pledge given last session, the Ministers brought forward. The bill originally framed by Lord Liverpool's cabinet was introduced by Mr Canning, on March 1st, in a speech of very great ability, which added another to the many proofs which history affords, that ability of the highest order is capable of application at the will of its possessor to any imaginable subject. He began by stating: "Everybody *admitted the necessity of protecting the agricultural interests;* the only question was the mode and degree in which that protection should be administered. That protection is due to domestic agriculture can hardly be de-

nied; and, on the other hand, stern inflexible prohibition can hardly be defended; for even those of the agriculturists who were most attached to it, uniformly made it a recommendation of their plan, that Parliament, if it were sitting, and if not, the executive government, might always step in, in cases of necessity. Three modes of protection had been proposed: the first, that of Mr Ricardo, that the duty on wheat should be 20s. a quarter, to diminish a shilling with every year till it reached a *minimum* of 10s.; the second, a similar duty, lowering 1s. every year, but beginning at 16s. and coming down to 10s.; the third, a fixed duty of 5s. or 6s. once for all, without any reference to the price.

78. Continued.

"The great fluctuations of price between 1815 and 1822 proved that some modification of the Corn Law, introduced in the former of these years, was accordingly necessary, and a new act was passed which gave up unlimited protection, and recognised a certain duty; but the effect of it was in a great measure lost by a clause which declared that the new act should come into operation only when the price exceeded 80s., which it had never since done, so that the act had remained a dead letter. Instead of this, what is now proposed is, to adopt, not a fixed, but a variable duty, which should vary in the relative proportion to the price of corn. The duty on wheat is to be 20s. when the price has reached 60s. a quarter, and to diminish 2s. a quarter with every 4s. advance of the price, so that at 70s. all duty would cease. On the other hand, when the price was 59s., the duty would be 22s., and so on, till, when it fell to 55s., it would amount to 30s., which might be considered as equivalent to a prohibition. On inferior grains, the same variable duty, but at a lower rate. Barley, at 30s., was to pay a duty of 10s. a quarter; oats, at 21s., of 7s.: the former to diminish by 1s. 6d. for every 1s. advance in the price, and increase for every 1s. in the fall below that standard; the latter to increase or diminish by 1s."[1] The obvious intention of this proposal was to

[1] Parl. Deb. xvi. 758, 779; Ann. Reg. 1827, 65, 69.

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fix the price of wheat as nearly as possible at 60s. a quarter, that of barley at 30s., that of oats at 21s.

79. Result of the debate in the Commons and Lords.

It is unnecessary to recapitulate the arguments used on this occasion on either side, which were substantially the same as those adduced in the preceding session, of which an account has already been given. But several very curious things occurred in the course of it, indicating at once the strength of the agricultural interest in the legislature as then constituted, and the strange mistakes on the subject which were made on both sides in the discussion of it. "On a division," says the annalist, "the amendment was lost, and the resolutions of Ministers carried by a majority of 335 to 50; *so small was the proportion of members from whom the agriculturists had to fear any very near approach to a free trade in grain.*" In the committee the majorities in favour of Ministers were generally 3 to 2, and the bill passed the Lower House ultimately without a division; but its fate was very different in the House of Lords. Before it went there the change of Ministry had taken place; Mr Canning was Premier, and the Duke of Wellington leader of the Opposition in the House of Lords. The Corn Laws, which so powerfully affected the interests of the greater part of that assembly, were deemed a favourable ground on which to combat the new Ministry with the forces of the old Tory aristocracy, and an amendment was prepared which it was hoped might prove fatal to the bill. The result did not belie these anticipations. There were, it was understood, above 500,000 quarters of foreign grain in bond in the country; and the Duke of Wellington moved as an amendment, that "no foreign grain in bond shall be taken out of bond until the average price of corn shall have reached 66s." This was resisted by Ministers on the ground that the effect of this clause would be to keep the average price up at 66s., and entirely defeat the principle of the bill; but on a division it was carried against them by a majority of 4, the numbers being 78

to 74. This majority, upon a subsequent division in a much fuller House, increased to 11, the numbers being 133 to 122. Upon this the Ministers threw up the bill, not without many expressions of anger and disappointment. Even Mr Canning, in speaking of the subject in the House of Commons, in the last speech he ever made in that assembly, said that the Duke, "while meaning no harm, had made himself the instrument of others for their own particular views."[1] *

[1] Parl. Deb. xvii. 1338; Ann. Reg. 1827, 147, 155.

80. Important and curious things occurring in the course of the debate.

As the Corn Laws were settled on a footing which lasted some years in the next session of Parliament, this defeat was a matter of little public importance; but three things are very curious, and deserving of being recorded, which occurred in the course of it. The first is, that Mr Peel said, in reference to an amendment of Sir John Newport to raise the duty on wheat-flour by a permanent duty of 4s. at all times, "no other country besides the United States could enter into competition with our markets, and she *had not much to send.* The largest importation of American flour was in 1817, and that was only 100,000 barrels, equal to 68,000 quarters." To us, who see several millions of American flour annually imported into Great Britain, this is a curious instance of the danger of legislating for future times, on the supposition that they are to remain the same as the present. The second was, that, from the returns of prices for forty-four years prior to 1827, the average price of wheat had been 56s. a quarter, of barley 30s., and of oats 20s. 6d. Third, these returns were referred to by Mr Peel as affording the best criterion of the rates at which cultivation could be carried on

* It appeared from a correspondence between the Duke of Wellington and Mr Huskisson on this amendment, that the Duke had laboured under a misapprehension of the views of Government regarding it. Mr Huskisson stated that Ministers would not object to the amendment, understanding it to apply only to the corn "*then in bond;*" but the Duke of Wellington thought he meant they had no objections to the prohibition up to 66s., as a *permanent restriction* on foreign importation. There is no reason to doubt the good faith of either in the affair; but assuredly they were very different things.—*See the Correspondence*, June 1827, in *Ann. Reg.*, 1827, pp. 148, 153.

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at a profit in the British Islands; and so they would, if no changes in the currency had taken place during the period embraced by the returns. But it never seems to have crossed his mind that the successive expansion and contraction of the currency had entirely changed prices of every article of subsistence during their continuance, and that the price of food was much more dependent on the number of notes in circulation than even on the number of quarters of foreign grain imported. But that was the prevailing error of the age; and it speaks not a little for the penetration and statesmanlike wisdom of Sir Francis Burdett, that nearly alone in the House of Commons he supported the opposite views, and referred to the bill of 1819 as far more instrumental in producing the depression of prices, of which the agriculturists so much complained, than either the variations of season or any importation of foreign grain.[1]*

[1] Parl. Deb. xvi. 1119, 1122.

81. Finances of 1826-27-28.

The finances of the country during the years 1826, 1827, and 1828, exhibited a painful proof of the extent to which the industrial resources of the country had been affected by the monetary crisis of December 1825, and the contraction of the currency by the suppression of small notes in the spring succeeding. There was no more boast of a remission of £12,000,000 of taxation in three years, as had been done in the three preceding years: it was with great difficulty, and only by pressing the dead weight into the service, that a surplus of revenue at all above expenditure was exhibited, or the real sinking fund in terms of the resolutions of the House of

* The following parliamentary return, referred to in the course of this debate, will show how close had been, in the preceding ten years, the connection between the price of grain and the amount of the currency:—

| Years. | Price of wheat. | Circulation of Notes in England. | Years. | Price of wheat. | Circulation of Notes in England. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1818, | 84s. | £46,000,000 | 1823, | 52s. | £35,000,000 |
| 1819, | 73s. | 42,000,000 | 1824, | 64s. | 39,000,000 |
| 1820, | 65s. | 38,000,000 | 1825, | 66s. | 42,000,000 |
| 1821, | 54s. | 34,000,000 | 1826, | 57s. | 36,000,000 |
| 1822, | 43s. | 31,000,000 | | | |

—*Parl. Deb.*, xvii., p. 288.

Commons in 1819. As the dead-weight was in truth a loan, paid annually by instalments on the credit of future years, this view was of course fallacious, and gave a melancholy proof of the shifts to which successive administrations were now reduced to conceal the effect upon the finances which their own measures had produced. During these three years the entire taxation reduced was £261,000 a-year; and the sums applied to the reduction of debt, funded and unfunded, were in all £15,993,902.[1] *

[1] Porter's Parl. Tables, ii. 6, 8.

| Years. | Taxes remitted. | Money applied to debt. |
|---|---|---|
| * 1826, | £84,000 | £5,621,231 |
| 1827, | 51,000 | 5,704,706 |
| 1828, | 126,000 | 4,667,965 |
| | £261,000 | £15,993,902 |

The finances of the three years stood as follows:—

INCOME.

*Ordinary.*

| | 1826. | 1827. | 1828. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Customs, | £17,280,711 | £17,894,405 | £17,235,408 |
| Excise, | 19,172,019 | 18,483,707 | 20,759,635 |
| Stamps, | 6,702,350 | 6,811,226 | 7,107,950 |
| Taxes, | 4,702,743 | 4,768,273 | 4,849,303 |
| Post-Office, | 1,570,000 | 1,463,000 | 1,508,000 |
| Lesser Sources, | 197,657 | 205,941 | 200,729 |
| Ordinary revenue, | £49,625,485 | £49,581,576 | £51,665,077 |
| *Extraordinary.* | | | |
| Dead Weight, | 4,380,000 | 4,245,000 | 3,082,500 |
| Lesser Sources, | 889,501 | 1,005,930 | 339,564 |
| | £54,894,989 | £54,932,518 | £55,187,142 |

EXPENDITURE.

| | 1826. | 1827. | 1828. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Interest of Funded Debt, | £27,245,750 | £27,366,601 | £27,146,076 |
| Unfunded, | 831,207 | 873,246 | 949,429 |
| Army & Navy Pensions, | 2,800,000 | 2,800,000 | 1,692,870 |
| Civil List, | 2,164,173 | 2,218,218 | 2,204,553 |
| Public Advances, | 510,000 | 254,200 | 2,337,497 |
| Army, | 8,297,360 | 7,876,682 | 8,084,042 |
| Navy, | 6,540,634 | 6,414,727 | 5,667,969 |
| Ordnance, | 1,869,606 | 1,914,403 | 1,446,972 |
| Miscellaneous, | 2,566,783 | 2,863,247 | 2,012,115 |
| Do., | 1,060,024 | 1,217,964 | ... |
| | *£59,272,925 | *£59,068,778 | *£54,623,565 |

* Including charges of collection.

—*Finance Accounts in Ann. Reg.*, 1827, 264; 1828, 271, 272; 1829, 256, 258.

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82. Other proceedings in Parliament —silk-weavers, shipowners.

The other proceedings in Parliament during this session do not require particular notice, as they were chiefly the consequence of measures already adopted, and of which the bearing has already been discussed. Mr Peel, though out of office, continued his meritorious labours for the reform of the criminal law, and the capital punishment was taken from many offences which it was a disgrace to English legislation to have ever affixed to them. The silk-weavers and shipowners made loud complaints of the manner in which their interests had been sacrificed at the altar of Free Trade, and referred to numerous arrays of figures in support of their petitions, which produced long and interesting debates in both Houses of Parliament. No result, however, followed from these discussions, except the usual one of confirming both parties in their opinions. The weavers and shipowners referred, in support of their complaints, to the miserably low wages—not a half of those of the preceding year—which they were able to earn, and the diminished number of ships and tonnage they employed. Mr Huskisson and the Free-traders replied by referring to the steady importation of the raw material, and the increase of the *entire* tonnage, foreign and domestic, employed in conducting our trade. Neither answer was decisive—for persons in distress generally try to compensate lessened profits by increased production, and thus enlarged consumption of the raw material arises from the very suffering of those engaged in working it up; and the question in regard to shipping was not how our whole tonnage, foreign and domestic, stood, so much as the proportion increasing or diminishing of the one to the other, which has been already fully given.[1] The curious thing, however, is, that scarce any mention was made by either party of the contraction of the currency as affecting prices, and imposing a weight on the springs of industry which all the energies of the country were unable to shake off. And the insensibility of the

[1] Ante, c. xix. § 30.

legislature to the complaints of the persons suffering under these changes is to be remarked, as one of the many causes concurring at this period to shake the confidence of the people in existing institutions, and spreading far and wide the opinion that any change would be for the better, and that some alteration had become necessary in the composition of a legislature which had proved itself indifferent to the sufferings of the people.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xvi. 1266, 1271; xvii. 547, 553, 1265, 1300.

83. Penryn and East Retford are convicted of bribery. Commencement of the Reform question.

When men's minds were in this unsettled state, and the working classes were in many places petitioning for some compulsory law to arrest the fall of wages, an event occurred which gave the ill humours which were afloat a definite direction, and turned them into a torrent which ere long became irresistible. At the last election—as is generally the case when parties run very high, and great exertions are made on opposite sides to increase their adherents in Parliament—bribery had prevailed to a very great, and, as it was said by the advocates of reform, unprecedented extent. Numerous petitions against returns upon this ground were presented, and in two instances — those of PENRYN and EAST RETFORD—the proof of corruption on the greatest scale was so complete that not only were both returns set aside, but leave was given to bring in bills to disfranchise both boroughs. The bill brought in by Government proposed only to extend the franchise to the adjacent hundred, that being, as Mr Canning said, "a mitigated penalty suited to the nature of the offence proved, although, in more flagrant cases, such as Grampound, he should not hesitate to vote for total disfranchisement." The Whigs, however, led by Lord Milton and Mr Brougham, insisted for total disfranchisement, and an amendment to that effect was carried by a majority of 124 to 69. No resolution was taken concerning the place to which the franchise should be transferred, but great anxiety was already felt on the subject. The Liberals contended for

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Birmingham, the Conservatives inclined to the circumjacent hundred. Both parties felt the vital importance of the question, but they mutually feared each other, and the session closed without any determination having been come to on the subject. But the point was mooted, and could no longer be avoided; and this deserves to be noted as the commencement of the great question of PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1827, 179, 181.

84. Proud position of Mr Canning.

The session was closed by a speech from the throne, by the Lords Commissioners, on the 2d July; and an event soon after occurred which made a profound impression on England and the world, and afforded a memorable example of the unstable tenure by which worldly greatness is held. Mr Canning now saw every wish of his heart gratified. He had raised himself, by the unaided force of genius and eloquence, from a private station to the highest position in the State. He was the Prime Minister of the Crown, the admired leader of the House of Commons, the head of an administration stronger than any since the days of Pitt, and looked up to, in every part of the world, as the protector of the oppressed, the enlightened assertor of liberal principles. He was still in the prime of life; he had done much in conciliating the regard of his Sovereign; his sway in Parliament was unbounded; and he might hope for a long career of fame, fortune, and usefulness. "Vanity, vanity—all is vanity:" the hand of fate was already upon him, and he was to be suddenly snatched from the scene of his glory, at the very moment when he seemed to have attained the summit of earthly felicity!

85. His susceptible disposition and increasing illness.

Though by no means of a weakly constitution, Mr Canning shared in an infirmity common to all men of genius, and which, though it is sometimes concealed by the vigour of a powerful understanding, is never probably entirely absent from a mind gifted with the highest imaginative faculties. He was not irritable, but eminently *susceptible;* he felt kindly, but he also felt warmly;

incapable of harbouring an ungenerous sentiment, he suffered grievously under what seemed a want of generosity or justice in others. To a mind of this temperament, the very greatness to which he had been elevated became a source of anguish, the cause of disappointment. He had ascended the ladder, not at the head of his friends, but alone. At the summit of the battlement, he found himself surrounded by new faces, supported by former antagonists, while his old comrades, in sullen discontent, stood at a distance, lending no assistance. Cheered as he was from all sides of the House, leading a decided majority in his country, revered in every quarter of the globe, he yet felt that one thing was now awanting—the confidence of old friends, the sympathy of former associates. He had attained the pinnacle of ambition, but he found himself there in solitary grandeur. He felt like Burke: "I am alone; I know I have lost my former friends, and I am too old to form new ones." The cold look, the averted eyes, the unreturned pressure of the hand, told at what price he had purchased his present elevation; and this was felt the more keenly, that his own heart was still overflowing with the generous affections, and he experienced in success none of the irritation which his former friends perhaps not unnaturally evinced in disappointment.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1827, 191.

86. His last illness and death.

These causes of irritation proved the more serious to Mr Canning, that, although temperate in his general habits, and addicted to no excess, he participated in the pleasure, as much as he excelled in the powers of conversation; and when in company, he sought a momentary relaxation from the cares of office, the irritation at defection, in the brilliant and animated discourse which spread so great a charm over his private society. This insensibly led to a greater indulgence in the pleasures of company than was perhaps prudent in a person of his excitable temperament; and the result was an inflamed state of mind and body, which led to fatal results. On

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the 15th July he became seriously indisposed, from having caught cold while sitting under a tree, when warm with walking, at Lord Lyndhurst's, at Wimbledon. On the 25th, he was, on the recommendation of his medical advisers, removed to Chiswick, the beautiful villa of the Duke of Devonshire, where he was lodged in the room in which Mr Fox had died. His complaint, which turned into inflammation of the bowels, after having more than once abated so as to give hopes of convalescence, returned ere long with redoubled violence. His sufferings were dreadful, and painful to witness, but he never lost his serenity of mind; and on the Sunday before his death he had prayers read to him by his daughter, his custom always when he could not attend church. Shortly after this, his sufferings ceased, but it was from the commencement of mortification in the seat of the disease. He gradually sunk, and breathed his last on the morning of Wednesday, August 8th. His funeral, at his own request, was a private one; but he was laid in Westminster Abbey, among the ashes of the great, and it was voluntarily attended by a large concourse of the nobility and estimable persons, as well as an immense crowd of spectators, anxious to testify their respect to the first and most gifted citizen of a free people.[1]

[1] Life of Canning, 350, 369; Huskisson's Life, 137; Ann. Reg. 1827, 189, 190; Martineau, i. 444, 445.

87. Reflections on this event.

Mr Canning's death made a prodigious impression in the world, second only to that produced twenty-five years after by the decease of the Duke of Wellington. It was not merely the genius and talents of the departed statesman, great as they were, which led to this sensation,—it was the direction which they had latterly taken, the objects to which they had come to be applied, which caused the heart of the world to thrill with emotion. "His," it has been finely said, "was a life in which all put trust, more, perhaps, than they should in that of mortal, from the isles of Greece to the ridges of the Andes."[2] For the first time since the French Revolution, the Government of England, under his direction, had been

[2] Miss Martineau.

turned to the support of democratic principles: he was looked up to as the head of the liberal party throughout the globe. Great was the sensation produced by this conversion. The popular party in every country anticipated a speedy triumph to their principles, the immediate elevation of themselves to power and riches, now that the great antagonist State, which had conquered the child of Revolution, was brought round to the other side at the voice of this mighty enchanter. Proportionally deep was the gloom, general the distress, when he was thus cut off in the very zenith of his career, and at the very time when he had attained the means of carrying his principles into practice.

88. Had he lived, he would have disappointed their expectations.

And yet there can be no doubt that these anticipations were fallacious, and that these hopes would have been disappointed had his earthly career been much prolonged. Mr Canning was too great a man to be a republican: his was not the temper that would yield to the dictates of an imperious democracy. Questions were coming on, and could no longer be avoided, which would have dispelled the illusion, and deprived the great commoner of the halo of renown with which he descended to the tomb. He was averse to the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, the steady and uncompromising opponent of parliamentary reform. His opposition to the Liberals on these questions would have speedily alienated the popular party, who can bear anything rather than a check from their own leaders; and a few years more of his life would probably have seen the windows of the emancipator of South America barricaded, like those of the deliverer of the Peninsula. He was essentially Conservative and *national* in his feelings, and that was the secret of his otherwise inconsistent career. He was a Conservative on principle, a Liberal from feeling and ambition. His sympathies were with freedom; but his judgment told him it was not to be won by yielding to the people. His most celebrated acts, the expedition to

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Portugal and recognition of the republics of South America, were not, as the Liberals suppose, instigated by a desire to elevate popular power, but from a strong patriotic principle, and a desire to counterbalance the influence and divert the ambition of France.

89. Review of his last acts.

Many of Mr Canning's last acts, which occasioned so much excitement at the time, were plainly justifiable. His interference in favour of Greece, and conclusion of the treaty of 6th July, which established its independence, was a noble act, called for by every consideration of justice and expedience, and calculated to avert one of the greatest evils of modern times, the government of the Turks in Europe. His expedition to Portugal was done on the call of an ancient ally, and necessary to maintain the character of England among nations, as well as stop the ambitious projects of France. But his interference in favour of the insurgents of South America, which chiefly gained him the applause of the Liberals, was an unjustifiable measure, calculated to partition the territory of an ancient ally, and spread the discordant passion for republicanism among a people unable to exercise its rights or bear its excitement. It has, accordingly, been attended with the most disastrous results. Mr Canning said he resolved, if France had Spain, it should not be Spain and the Indies, and that he called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old. What was this but to imitate the example of Maria Theresa, who said, when the Empress Catherine invaded Poland, "If you take Lithuania, it shall not be Lithuania *with Gallicia;* and I will appropriate the latter province to maintain the balance of European power." It is justifiable to assert the rights, and maintain, by fair means, the influence of your country; but it is a very different thing to do so by partitioning an ancient ally, and spreading a form of government, in a new hemisphere, unsuited to its character and ruinous to its happiness.

Mr Canning's talents, both for business and debate,

were of the very first order. Like all other men gifted with the highest class of intellect, his was capable of application at will to any subject; and the man whose eloquence and play of fancy had so often charmed and enchained the House of Commons, was equally felicitous when he came to discuss the details of finance or the corn averages, as Chancellor of the Exchequer or leader of the House of Commons. But though his powers were thus capable of various application, his disposition led him to the realms of imagination; his longing was to the world of fancy more than the world of reality: he was fitted by nature to have been a great author rather than a great statesman. As it was his powers of eloquence which gave him the lead in the House of Commons, so it was the qualities with which they were allied which cut him short at the highest point of his career. The susceptibility to sentiment, the fineness of feeling, the refinement of thought, which constituted the charm of his eloquence not less than logical precision its strength, were mainly owing to the unhappy sensitiveness with which, in poetic minds, they are so frequently allied, and which threw him, on the alienation of his friends, into the state of mental excitement which led to results that proved fatal to his constitution. If the brevity of his career as Minister gave him few opportunities of engraving his acts in indelible characters on the annals of his country, he made good use of the short time that was allotted him, and has left a name second to none, in point of brilliancy, of all the statesmen who ever guided the destinies of England.

90. His character as a statesman and orator.

The King, it is now known, had been personally hurt at the resignation of the six Cabinet Ministers when Mr Canning was appointed,* and for this reason, as well as the strength of the liberal party in the Cabinet, no attempt

* "The King blamed all the ministers who had retired when Mr Canning was made Minister, and represented in substance, that it was they, and not he, who had made Mr Canning minister."—TWISS's *Life of Lord Eldon*, iii. 82.

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91. Lord Goderich made premier, and reconstruction of the Cabinet.

was made to offer the premiership to any of their party. Mr Huskisson, whose health, as well as that of Mr Canning, had suffered severely from the anxieties of office during the last six months, had gone abroad on the close of the session, and was in the Styrian Alps when the intelligence of Mr Canning's death reached him. He was not, moreover, of sufficient weight in the House to justify his being placed at the head of the Cabinet. The King, therefore, as a matter of necessity, sent for Lord Goderich, who, as Chancellor of the Exchequer in the days of prosperity, had been a very popular Minister, and he was appointed Premier. Mr Huskisson succeeded Lord Goderich as Colonial Secretary, and Mr Herries was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer. His appointment gave such offence to the Whigs that Lord Lansdowne waited on his Majesty with his resignation of his office as Home Secretary, and was only prevailed on to hold it, on the assurance that it was not the King who had recommended him to Lord Goderich, but Lord Goderich who had recommended him to the King. Lord Harrowby retired from the office of President of the Council, which was bestowed on the Duke of Portland, and Lord Carlisle succeeded his grace as Lord Privy Seal. Sir A. Hart was made Chancellor of Ireland, and Mr Shadwell Vice-Chancellor of England. The Duke of Wellington, who had retired chiefly from a sense of personal slight on Mr Canning's appointment, immediately resumed his place as Commander-in-Chief, though without a seat in the Cabinet. The Government, as remodelled, was, upon the whole, of a Whig character, though several members of it adhered to Conservative principles.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1827, 191, 192; Eldon's Life, iii. 20, 24; Huskisson's Memoirs, 142, 143.

92. Weakness of the new Cabinet, and its cause.

Lord Goderich's Cabinet has become a byword in subsequent times; and certainly its troubled existence, and speedy termination without external causes, prove that the seeds of dissolution were from the first implanted in its bosom. It was not, however, from any deficiency in abi-

lity that this tendency to decay arose; on the contrary, the Cabinet presented a splendid array of names, which it would have been difficult to have found a parallel to, in point of ability, in any other list in the kingdom. Its weakness arose from that very ability itself, and the different sentiments with which its highly-gifted members were animated. The weakness of a coalition is in the direct ratio of the talent and vigour of its members; its strength of their weakness, provided there are one or two brilliant exceptions. What makes them, in general, after a brief period, fall to pieces, is not that they want talents to do great things, but that those things are different. Weak men of different opinions can hold together, because they all yield to the ascendant of superior genius; but strong men cannot do so for any length of time, because no one will yield to another.

93. Impolitic reduction of the yeomanry.

Though nearly impotent from this cause for good, the new Ministry showed, even in its cradle, it was adequate to evil. One of its first steps was to reduce to a third of its former amount the yeomanry cavalry of Great Britain, the numbers being reduced from 35,500 to 13,500. Various additions have since been made to this noble force, which unites the high and the low by the bonds of common loyalty to their country and each other; but it has never attained anything like the numerical amount which it had then reached. This strange step was the more reprehensible that the military force of Great Britain, reduced to the lowest point by the clamour for economy, was dispersed over every quarter of the globe in defence of our colonies; that the alarming insurrections of 1820 and 1821 had been put down mainly by the yeomanry force, which had a moral influence much beyond its physical strength; and that the state of Ireland, as will be immediately shown, was so threatening that every regular soldier was required from Great Britain to prevent rebellion openly breaking out. All these considerations,

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how pressing soever, yielded to the desire to suppress the "Tory clubs," as the yeomanry regiments were called in private by the Whig leaders.* This reduction excited the greatest discontent, and many of the regiments offered to serve without pay, but it was refused; a decision which demonstrated it was political, not financial, considerations which had suggested the reduction. It was a melancholy proof of the length to which party spirit can carry even estimable and able men, when the first use of power made by a great party, when they had obtained it after a long exclusion, was to weaken the bulwarks of the throne in order that they might extinguish the cradle of loyalty.

94. Dissolution of the Goderich Cabinet.

The divisions in the Cabinet were so well known that it was generally expected it would break up before the end of the year. It dragged a painful existence on, however, to the beginning of 1828. Matters were brought to a crisis in the first week of January by the necessity of appointing a finance committee, agreeably to a promise made by Mr Canning, when opening the budget of the preceding year. The Cabinet, on the suggestion of Mr Tierney, who took the lead on the occasion, had resolved on LORD ALTHORPE, eldest son of Earl Spencer, a Whig leader, who soon after rose to eminence. This resolution was taken with the concurrence of Lord Goderich, but without the knowledge of Mr Herries, who, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, naturally thought he should at least have been consulted on such an appointment. The result was, that Mr Herries tendered his resignation, which Lord Goderich received with considerable agitation. On his side, Mr Huskisson intimated to Lord Goderich that he would resign if the nomination of Lord Althorpe was not carried through; [1] and as Lord Goderich now deemed it requisite to put a veto on that

Nov. 30, 1827.

Dec. 21.

[1] Mr Huskisson to Lord Goderich, Jan. 7, 1828; Ann. Reg. 1828, 9, 11.

* The Author often heard them so designated at that time by persons of the highest eminence in the confidence of Government.

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appointment, Mr Huskisson tendered his resignation, and Lord Goderich, seeing it impossible to carry on the Government, escaped the difficulty by resigning himself.

Jan. 8.

95. The Duke of Wellington appointed premier, and his Cabinet.

The King, thus deserted by the Coalition Ministry, as a matter of necessity sent for the Duke of Wellington, who, albeit of military habits, and little skilled in the intrigues of courts, hastened, with his wonted patriotic spirit, to respond to the summons of his Sovereign. Few changes in the Cabinet, in the first instance at least, took place on his appointment. The Liberal Tories remained, but the decided Whigs retired. Lord Lansdowne resigned his situation as Home Secretary, which Mr Peel, with the entire concurrence of the nation, resumed. Mr Tierney resigned the Mastership of the Mint; Lord Melville was restored to his position as head of the Admiralty; Mr Goulburn was made Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Earl Bathurst President of the Council. Sir James Scarlett resigned the office of Attorney-General, and was succeeded by Sir Charles Wetherall. But the whole Canning party—Lord Dudley and Ward, Lord Palmerston, and Mr C. Grant—retained their places; and even Mr Huskisson and Mr Herries, whose hostility had proved fatal to the late Ministry, remained in power, not without some regret on the part of the friends of the former.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1828, 9, 12; Martineau, i. 458, 459.

96. Mr Huskisson's resignation on the East Retford question, and that of his friends. May 20.

Mr Huskisson, however, soon found that it is easier to retain office in a divided Cabinet than public estimation by forming part of it. A question ere long arose, on which the divergence of opinion between him and the majority of his colleagues became apparent. The great question of parliamentary reform lay as a stumbling-block in their way, and it was brought on early in the next session of Parliament by the pending bills for the disfranchisement of Penryn and East Retford. The bill for the first passed the Commons without opposition, with a clause transferring the franchise to Manchester—

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the Tories trusting that it would be thrown out in the Peers, and wishing to throw upon the Upper House the odium of an unpopular step. But as a town had got one of the disfranchised seats, they contended, not without some show of reason, that the country should get the next; and, accordingly, they all voted, with the exception of Mr Huskisson, against transferring the seat to Birmingham. It was carried against giving the seat to Birmingham by a majority of 19; the numbers, 141 to 122. Mr Huskisson, however, voted with the minority; and deeming this deviation from his colleagues, on a vital question, a sufficient reason for not longer retaining office, he sent a letter to the Duke of Wellington, at two in the morning, after returning from the debate, resigning his office.* This resignation the Duke next day carried to the King, by whom it was accepted. Mr Huskisson does not seem to have reckoned on this being done; for Lord Dudley, on his part, went to the Duke, to endeavour to convince his Grace that he laboured under a mistake, and that no resignation was intended. The laconic answer of the Duke, however, since become proverbial, cut the matter short: "It is no mistake; it can be no mistake; and *it shall be no mistake.*" The Duke persisted, after some correspondence, in regarding it in this light; and Mr Huskisson being thus out of the Cabinet, his retirement was followed by that of the whole Canning party.[1] Lord Dudley, Lord Palmerston, and Mr C. Grant, immediately resigned, and this was soon after followed by

[1] Parl. Deb. xix. 805, 811; Ann. Reg. 1828, 15, 16, 19.

"DOWNING STREET, 2 A.M., *May* 2.

* "MY DEAR DUKE,—After the vote which, in regard to my own consistency and personal character, I have found myself compelled to give on the East Retford question, I owe it to you, as the head of the Administration, and to Mr Peel, as the leader of the House of Commons, to lose no time in affording you an opportunity of placing my office in other hands, as the only means in my power of preventing the injury to the King's service which may ensue from the appearance of disunion in his Majesty's Councils, however unfounded in reality, or however unimportant in itself the question which has given rise to that appearance."—*Ann. Reg.* 1828, p. 15. This was couched in almost the express words of the resignation of Mr Herries, not many weeks before.

that of the Duke of Clarence from the situation of Lord High Admiral. This last resignation, however, was on separate grounds from the general withdrawal of Mr Canning's friends.

97. Reconstruction of the Cabinet by Wellington

These resignations deprived the Ministry of its coalition character, and the Duke of Wellington proceeded with his usual decision in filling up the vacant offices. The persons to whom situations were offered were partly military; but the capacity they evinced in their new duties soon proved that the Duke had not been mistaken in his estimate of their characters. Mr Huskisson was succeeded in the Colonial Office by Sir George Murray, the tried and able Quartermaster-General in all the Peninsular campaigns; Lord Dudley in the Foreign Office by Lord Aberdeen; Sir Henry Hardinge, the hero of Albuera, was made Secretary at War instead of Lord Palmerston; Mr Vesey Fitzgerald was put at the head of the Board of Trade in room of Mr C. Grant. The Cabinet was now reconstructed entirely out of the Tory party, and the weakness incident to a coalition was at an end. But it soon appeared that the days of Tory domination were also closed, and that even the decided will of the "Iron Duke" must yield to the necessities of his new situation, and the opinions of a growing Liberal majority in the House of Commons.[1] *

[1] Ann. Reg. 1828, 21.

One of the first debates in the next session of Parliament was on the celebrated speech from the throne concerning the battle of Navarino, which was justly looked forward to with great interest by all Europe, as embodying the

* The Duke of Wellington's Cabinet, as finally constructed, stood as follows:—

First Lord of the Treasury, Duke of Wellington; Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Goulburn; Home Secretary, Mr Peel; Foreign Secretary, Lord Aberdeen; Colonial Secretary, Sir George Murray; Lord Chancellor, Lord Lyndhurst; Secretary at War, Sir H. Hardinge; First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Melville; President of the Council, Lord Bathurst; Privy Seal, Lord Ellenborough; Board of Trade, Mr Vesey Fitzgerald; Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Anglesea.—*Ann. Reg.* 1828, pp. 19, 21.

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sentiments of the new ministry on the Greek revolution. His Majesty then said: "In the course of the measures adopted with the view to carry into effect the treaty of July 6, a collision wholly unexpected by his Majesty took place in the port of Navarin, between the fleets of the contracting powers and that of the Ottoman Porte. Notwithstanding the valour displayed by the combined fleet, his Majesty deeply laments that this conflict should have occurred with the naval force of an ancient ally; but he still entertains a confident hope that this *untoward event* will not be followed by farther hostilities, and will not prevent that amicable adjustment of the existing differences between the Porte and the Greeks, to which it is so manifestly their common interest to accede." These words, and especially the expression "untoward event," which was certainly unsuitable for so glorious an achievement as that which delivered an entire Christian people from the Ottoman yoke, excited an immense sensation both in this country and over all Europe, and was justly deemed an undeserved slight on the commander who brought on the engagement. They were obviously dictated by the strong sense which the Duke of Wellington entertained, and has often expressed, of the importance of the independence of Turkey to the general balance of power in Europe, and of the obvious fact that the destruction of the Ottoman fleet exposed Constantinople without defence to an attack from the Russians issuing from Sebastopol. But that has always been the inherent and insurmountable difficulty of the Eastern Question, that justice cannot be done to the Christian population of Turkey without weakening its Mussulman Government, or independence given to its oppressed provinces without endangering that of the European States.

98. Notice of the battle of Navarino in the King's speech. Jan. 29.

99. Grant to Mr Canning's family.

Ministers, much to their honour, brought forward, early in the session, a proposal for a suitable provision for the family of Mr Canning, which had been raised to the peerage the day after his funeral. Richly as this testi-

monial to long and valuable public services was deserved, the proposal met with a strenuous opposition from Lord Althorpe, Mr Hume, Mr Bankes, and other leaders of the retrenching party in the House of Commons, who, while they admitted the splendid talents of the deceased, objected on economical grounds to such an appropriation of the public money. The grant, however, of £6000 a-year, was carried by a majority of 161 to 54, and the debate was chiefly memorable as containing a tribute from eminent men to the merits of the deceased. "That he was a man," said Sir James Mackintosh, "of the purest honour, I know; that he was a man of the most rare and splendid talents, I know; that he was a man renowned through Europe for his brilliant genius and philosophic thinking, not a member of this House can be ignorant; or that, with his best zeal, as well as with success, he applied that genius and those views of policy to advance the service and glory of his country. If there were those from whom he had differed—and can it be doubted that every politician will have some opposed to him?—this is not an hour when those differences should be recollected. A friendship of thirty-six years with him has given me, and I am not ashamed to confess it, a deep interest in any measure which is intended to do honour to his memory."[1] *

[1] Ann. Reg. 1828, 78; Parl. Deb. xix. 884, 890.

100. Finance Committee and Catholic question.

The Finance Committee, which had proved so fatal to the Goderich Administration, was appointed without opposition; Mr Peel was chairman, and both Mr Herries and Mr Huskisson were members. The Catholic question was again introduced, in a most eloquent speech by Sir Francis Burdett; and, after a prolonged debate of three nights, carried in favour of emancipation by a majority of 6, the numbers being 272 to 266. This

* Mr Canning's eldest son, to whom the title descended, was in the navy, and perished accidentally soon after his father. Fortunately the pension was granted for the life of the second son, to whom the family honours descended. —*Ann. Reg.* 1828, p. 78.

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majority, in a Parliament which, in the preceding session, had decided the other way by a majority of 11, proved how very nearly balanced the parties were on this momentous question, insomuch that it was a mere accident which way the vote went. It was well known also that there was a division, nearly as equal, even in the Duke of Wellington's cabinet, on the subject; and this equality, alike in the cabinet and the legislature, deserves to be specially noted, as obviously tying up the hands of Government, and precluding the adoption of vigorous measures against the Irish malcontents. It was, in truth, the main cause of the sudden conversion of the Duke of Wellington's cabinet on the subject, and the carrying of Catholic emancipation so soon after. It led, however, at the moment, to no practical result; for when the matter was carried to the House of Peers, it was thrown out by a majority of 44, the numbers being 181 to 137.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xix. 378, 675, 1294.

101. Corn-law Bill.

The two great measures of the session were the Corn-law Settlement, and the REPEAL OF THE TEST AND CORPORATION ACTS. Both were legislative acts of the utmost moment; for the first settled for a long period the disputed question between town and country, and the last struck the first successful blow which had been delivered during an hundred and fifty years at the supremacy of the Church of England. It was obviously indispensable to come to some arrangement in regard to the Corn Laws—the bill for which, after having passed the Commons by a large majority, had been abandoned, as already mentioned, in the Peers, in consequence of an amendment deemed fatal to the principle of the bill, prohibiting the letting out of bonded corn, having been carried by the Duke of Wellington.[2] The new bill, introduced now by Mr V. Fitzgerald, adopted the principle of the sliding-scale, and made no alteration on the duties proposed the preceding year on barley, oats, and rye; but in regard to wheat the turning-point was different, beginning at 52s., when the duty was to be 34s. 8d.,

[2] Ante, c. xxi. § 78.

and falling 1s. by every shilling the price advanced, till at 73s. it became 1s. only. The bill met with considerable opposition, the agriculturists contending for a higher, the Liberals for a lower rate; but at length it passed both Houses by large majorities, that in the Commons being 202 to 58; in the Lords, 86 to 19;—so firmly fixed was the agricultural interest at this period, in both Houses, at no great distance, in point of time, from an organic change which was to deprive them of all protection whatever.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1828, 111, 118; Parl. Deb. xviii. 1379, 1411, 1364, 1442.

102. Bill for the suppression of small notes.

So strongly was the cheapening party, notwithstanding this, intrenched in the legislature, that Government brought forward a bill to prohibit the circulation of Scotch bank-notes in England. These notes, being for £1 each, were found to be extremely convenient in practice, and accordingly they everywhere crept across the Border, and were received at last in all the northern counties of England, as far as York and Preston. This was justly complained of as a grievance by the English bankers, who, restrained from issuing small notes themselves, found this profitable branch of their business taken out of their hands by strangers who still enjoyed the privilege of doing so. It never occurred to the legislature that the system of excluding such notes from circulation was the really erroneous thing; and that the English public would not testify such anxiety to get Scotch notes, unless their circulation was found to be convenient in business and advantageous to the operations of commerce. All these considerations yielded to the desire felt to contract the circulation, and rest it entirely upon a metallic basis; and in this desire the landed interest, in total blindness as to the effect of such measures upon their own fortunes, for the most part concurred. Sir James Graham—whose tenantry at Netherby, on the western border, had largely shared in the benefits of the Scotch notes, and who himself had published an able pamphlet against the existing monetary system—in vain moved for a committee to inquire into the subject. He

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was answered by the argument, that to make any inquiry would be tantamount to going back on our whole monetary system. The result was that the bill passed both Houses by great majorities—in the Commons by eighty-two to seventeen—and the circulation of Scotch notes in England was entirely stopped. Very great distress was in consequence brought on the northern counties, especially among the small traders and farmers, who had long been supported by the advances of the Scotch bankers in the same way as they everywhere were to the north of the Tweed. This law, which excited little attention at the time, deserves to be noted as one of the many circumstances which concurred at this period to spread distress among the industrious classes, and consequently dissatisfaction at existing institutions, and which were silently but irresistibly preparing a change in the constitution.[1] *

[1] Parl. Deb. xviii. 982, 1033; Ann. Reg. 1828, 79, 83.

The next important question of the session, however, was

* This bill did not pass without the strongest opposition and clearest prophecy of future evils from the few in the House of Commons who entertained views different from those of the majority on the subject. Sir James Graham, who made a most admirable speech on the occasion, thus expressed himself: "To think that things could return to what they were before the war, was one of the most dangerous errors that could be entertained. The gentlemen opposite had contrived, however, not only to reduce corn to the standard that it maintained before the war, but in 1822 to 43s., lower than it had been since the Revolution. This miracle was produced by a very simple process—merely that of tampering with the currency, from which the landlord is sure to be the first to suffer. The value of money was heavily increased, while all contracts remained fixed to their nominal amount. The change bore down the amount of the landlord's receipt for his produce, while all the fixed charges and incumbrances on his property were increased. He was bound to pay in a currency 30 per cent higher in value than that in which he had borrowed, and the consequence was that he must retrench, abandon the hospitality and liberality of his ancestors, and live like a niggard and degraded man, and squeeze his tenants like an oppressor, or the monied man in five years walked in and took possession. The error was in the system: we had attempted a change which we could not bear, and we should be compelled to abandon. A decrease in the quantity of money in any country is the first step in the high-road to ruin. The right honourable gentleman opposite (Mr Peel) had said the other evening, in the debate on the Corn Laws, 'that the calling in the one-pound notes would *increase the value of money*, and consequently increase the amount of those duties out of which the protection was derived.'

"Suppose there should be a bad harvest. It is admitted that there is not more in the country than would afford a short supply. How was this to be

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103. Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts.

the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, which, in themselves momentous, acquired additional importance at the period when it was brought forward, from its being an obvious step to Catholic emancipation. To understand this subject it is necessary to premise that, by the 13th and 25th Charles II., all persons, before they were admitted into situations in corporations, or received into any office, civil or military, or any place of trust under the Crown, were obliged to receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper according to the rites of the Church of England. By the 16th George II. certain penalties were removed from persons who had not qualified in terms of this Act, who were appointed to situations under Government; but still it remained in force, especially so far as regarded situations in corporations, and acted as a barrier against the admission of Dissenters into places of trust and emolument at their disposal. As such it was regarded as one of the most important bulwarks of the Church of England; for not only did it prevent persons of adverse religious principles from getting into situations of trust, but it se-

made good but by an importation from abroad; and *how could that be got but by an exportation of gold from this country?* Here, then, would a want of currency be felt; and what was certain on the one hand would be uncertain on the other; for the intended limitation of the small paper currency would prevent the re-issue of the notes, and this would bring about such a difficulty as was felt in 1825, the only difference being that the one case was a domestic demand for gold, the other would be a foreign. The results would be the same. It was foolish in the extreme, because the paper system wanted regulation, to abolish it at once, without inquiry as to the probable effects of the abolition. It would be just as foolish to dash a watch in pieces because it wanted regulation. The paper currency was one of the great wheels of our system, and if it worked smoothly and without jerks, it was a most important one, for it was cheaper, and better, and more easily managed. I would say of a paper currency what was said in the *Inferno* of Dante to be inscribed over the gates of hell, 'Who enters here leaves all hope behind.' We have begun and gone on too far with the paper system to recede. The debt had been for the greater part contracted in paper, and must be paid in paper. It was impossible to think of taking any other course with effect."—*Parl. Deb.*, xix. pp. 999-1010. One of the most curious things in history is the clear manner in which the consequences of measures are seen by some people, and the entire blindness to them in others. This might pass for a description of the monetary crisis of 1848, deduced from its real cause. Still more curious perhaps is the way in which, after the truth has been clearly seen, it is lost sight of, in after times, even by the same individual.

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cured the advantages of such situations to those of the orthodox creed. On the other hand, the Dissenters alleged with reason that such distinctions were unjust and invidious between persons professing at bottom the same religious belief, and that it argued little of the strength in reason of the Established Church when it required to be propped up by such temporal considerations.

104. Argument for the repeal.

The question came on for debate on the 18th March, when it was argued by Lord John Russell, Lord Althorpe, Mr Smith of Norwich, and Mr Fergusson*: "However necessary and proper these restrictions may have been at the time they were originally imposed, to guard against an existing and overwhelming danger, that necessity no longer exists. There then did exist a party in the country which was set upon undermining our institutions, and whom it was perhaps necessary to exclude from situations of power, lest they should carry their designs into effect; but is it possible to assert that any such danger now exists? What pretext is there for any sacramental or other test to protect the Church from danger? Had any complaint ever been made against the principles and practice of such of the Dissenters as had got into office by the tests being not exacted during the last half-century? Practically speaking, the act has been for nearly a century in abeyance, in Government appointments, and no danger had accrued to the Established Church. All that is now required is, to efface an obsolete but invidious and discreditable act from our statute-book. When it has been ascertained by experience that no danger exists, is it either just or wise to keep up distinctions introduced and justified only by its reality? It is never expedient to presume disaffection against any class of society: such presumption is more likely than anything else to work out

* Of Craigdarroch in Dumfriesshire, afterwards Judge-Advocate of England, and a barrister of great ability in Calcutta, who had lately returned with a splendid fortune from India, and redeemed his ancient paternal inheritance in Scotland, and had been returned member for the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright.

its own realisation. Better, far better, to leave the opinion to prevail, that all men are equally bound to obey the laws upon the same obligations of common compact, than to take for one class as against the rest a form of words as a security which elsewhere was deemed unnecessary.

105. Continued.

"Look at Scotland: the Presbyterian religion is the established faith of that country. It is therefore a State religion as well as that of England; yet its members are affected by these laws, and prevented from serving their King, but at the risk of incurring these penalties, or renouncing their religion. Why proscribe a whole nation, upon the pretext that it is necessary to defend the Church and State as by law established? Why deny a community of privilege to those who encountered equal dangers, and bore equal burdens? On what occasion have the people of Scotland failed to contribute their full share to the support of Great Britain? Did the Church of England aspire, like the Mussulmans of Turkey, to be exclusively charged with the defence of the empire? If so, let the Presbyterians and Dissenters withdraw, and it will be seen what sort of defence it will have. Take the battle of Waterloo, which has crowned the renown of the most illustrious leader of these times. Take from the field the Scottish regiments; take away the aid, too, of the sons of Ireland; what would have been the chance of their arms, divested of the Scottish and Irish soldiers who filled their ranks, and served their navy in every quarter of the globe? If, then, they sought their aid in the hour of peril, ought they to deny them their confidence in times of tranquillity and peace?

106. Concluded.

"Equally futile is the argument that these laws are necessary as a security to the Church, which must always find its true protection, not in exclusion, but in its moderation, its fair temper, and decent worship, conformable to the sentiments and consciences of the majority of the people. The Dissenters can have no views against Church property; for they did not hold that great wealth was a

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recommendation to a church; and therefore they would not seek to aggrandise themselves. So long as they were excluded from their civil rights on account of religious distinction, it is impossible that they can view the Church with feelings of good-will; but when it laid down the character of a persecutor, it will cease to be an object of jealousy. The question as to the security of the Church had been practically decided in other parts of the kingdom. If the security of the Church of England is founded on the Test and Corporation Acts, where is the security for the Church of Scotland, where no such acts exist? The Corporation Act never was extended to Ireland, and the Test Act there was abolished forty-eight years ago, and yet no danger has accrued to the Church of England from its want. In fine, these statutes are a relic of a former age, introduced when we were afraid of driving the Church into the arms of the Jacobites, wholly unsuitable to a period when the Church will look for promotion and favour through no other channel than the legitimate one of his Majesty's Treasury and Chancery. The obvious effect of the repeal of these laws will be, to render the Dissenters better affected to the Government, to dispose them to submit to the heavy burdens imposed on them with cheerfulness, and, above all, it will be more consonant to the spirit of the age than those angry yet inefficient and impracticable laws which are a disgrace to the statute-book."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xviii. 1186, 1198; Ann. Reg. 1828, 87, 89.

107. Answer of Ministers.

On the other hand, it was maintained by Mr Peel and Mr Huskisson: "The question is certainly attended with considerable difficulty; and it cannot be said that it is interwoven with the interest of the Church of England, so that that establishment must fall if these acts are repealed. We are not, however, in an ancient monarchy like this, to alter everything merely because it does not suit the idea of a subsequent age. If we were to do so, how much of our time-honoured institutions would survive the changes of time? Is there anything so absurd

in these acts as to render their repeal necessary? If they are repealed, will the Dissenters be in a better situation? It is said, on the other side, the acts have been for nearly a century in abeyance, from the tests not having been exacted—if so, where is the practical grievance calling for their repeal? If, indeed, the large and respectable body of Dissenters really laboured under the grievances of which they complain, a very strong argument would arise from that circumstance for their removal; but are the grievances now brought forward in Parliament really felt as such by the Dissenters out of doors? So far from it, there have been only six petitions presented on the subject from 1816 to 1827; and as to the petitions got up last year, they were obviously done so for a political purpose. During the discussions on the Catholic question, these acts were never once referred to as a practical grievance. So far from it, in the Catholic Relief Bill, while all other grievances were proposed to be removed, those arising from these acts were left untouched. Mr Canning, the warm supporter of the Catholic claims, said, in the debate on that subject in 1825, 'This bill does not tend to equalise *all* the religions in the State, but to equalise all the *dissenting* sects of England. I am, and this bill is, for a predominant church; and I would not, even in appearance, meddle with the laws which secure that predominance to the Church of England. What is the state of the Protestant Dissenters? It is that they labour under no practical grievances on account of this difference with the Established Church; that they sit with us in this House, and share our councils; that they are admissible into the highest offices of State, and often hold them—such is the operation of the Test and Corporation Acts, as mitigated by the Annual Indemnity Act. This much, and *no more*, I contend the Catholics should enjoy.'

"We are told that in Scotland these acts operate as a proscription of a whole nation! Where, then, are the

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108. Concluded.

complaints from that country? From the whole population of Scotland there is not one solitary petition; so slight and impalpable is the grievance which is now magnified in debate into a serious ill. The Scotch have shed, it is said, their blood in the Peninsula and Waterloo. They have done so; and is there any military or naval office or command from which they have been shut out? But your test acts exclude them from the higher offices of Government. Why, look at the present Cabinet; out of fourteen members who compose it, three—Lord Aberdeen, Lord Melville, and Mr Grant—are Scotchmen, and good Presbyterians. Even in England the shutting-out is merely nominal. Last year the Lord Mayor of London was a Protestant Dissenter, and so in other corporations. The acts have practically gone into desuetude. In truth, the existing law merely gives a nominal preponderance to the Established Church, which it is admitted on all sides it should possess."[1]

[1] Parl Deb. xviii. 1182, 1202; Ann. Reg. 1828, 94.

109. The bill is carried in both Houses.

The bill was carried by a majority of 44 in the Commons, the numbers being 237 to 193. In the Peers it experienced a more decided opposition. Lord Eldon, in particular, was vehement in resisting it; declaring that, if these acts were repealed, there was nothing to hinder corporations being entirely filled up with adherents of the Church of Rome. The bill passed, however, with some trifling amendments, on 28th April, by a majority of 40, and soon received the royal assent. The only security taken was, that a solemn declaration, "on the true faith of a Christian," was substituted for the sacramental test of the former act.[2]

[2] Parl. Deb. xix. 42, 49; Ann. Reg. 1828, 100, 103.

110. Reflections on this subject.

It was evident from this result, as well as from the tone adopted by Mr Peel and Mr Huskisson in the House of Commons, that Government were far from being in reality hostile to the change, and that they were by no means averse to being left in a minority on this occasion. The High Church party were in despair. Lord Eldon declared "that, if he stood alone, he would go below the

bar, and vote against the bill; and were he called that night to render his account before Heaven, he would go with the consoling reflection that he had never advocated anything mischievous to his country." He added, "I have been fatigued and distressed by what has lately passed in the House of Lords. I have fought like a lion; but my talons have been cut off." [1] It is evident now, however, that these apprehensions were groundless; and that the Church of England has been strengthened, instead of being weakened, by this just and wise removal of disabilities from the Dissenters. Religious difference is never, taken by itself, a reason for political exclusion; it is when it is mixed up, as it unfortunately is in the case of the Roman Catholics, with political divisions, and subjection to a *foreign* authority, that such exclusion can alone be founded on it. It was obviously unjust to impose any test which had the effect of excluding any class of Protestant Dissenters along with the Catholics, because they acknowledged no foreign spiritual head, and their conduct had not afforded grounds for such disabilities. If, as was wisely alleged by Mr Peel, the exclusion had virtually become obsolete, from the test never being called for, and the penalties removed by the annual bill of indemnity, that only strengthened the argument for a repeal of the statutes imposing them; for why retain irritating and obnoxious acts on the statute-book which might afford a plausible ground of complaint, and confessedly were of no real utility?

[1] Life of Eldon, iii. 42, 43.

All these questions, however, were subordinate, and, in fact, but introductory to the great one of CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION, which in the course of this year assumed such importance as to force itself upon the consideration even of the most reluctant Government. The Catholics, who had, ever since the commencement of the Catholic Association, been moulded by the priests into a state of entire subjection to their spiritual and political leaders, had been very quiet during the brief period of Mr Canning's

III. Rapid increase of disturbances in Ireland.

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administration, became more noisy and active under that of Lord Goderich, and, on the accession of the Duke of Wellington to the helm, suddenly started up into portentous activity. The Association, which had been struck at by act of parliament, had never been in reality put down; its activity was only in abeyance; and on the return of the Tories to power, it recommenced its operations with the utmost vigour. No prosecutions were or could be thought of; for such was the division of opinion in Ireland, that it was next to impossible to get twelve men to agree on any political question; and by the strange infatuation of the English lawyers for their own institutions, without any regard to the character or circumstances of the people to whom they were applied, unanimity in juries was required where unanimity could never be expected. Thus impunity from punishment was certain, and the Catholic Association pursued its course with unrelenting vigour, under the direction of skilful leaders, who caused it to abstain carefully from any overt acts of treason, and were indifferent how much sedition was spoken in its assemblies.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1828, 121; Martineau, i. 472.

112. Facilities which the forty-shilling freeholders gave to their designs.

But the Association had now acquired such power that its operations were no longer confined to empty declamation, but directed openly and avowedly to obtaining a majority in Parliament for its partisans. A peculiar circumstance—the result of the unhappy extension of English institutions to a country unfitted for their reception—afforded great facilities for the attainment of this object. The forty-shilling freeholder, the stout yeoman owning an heritage worth £40 a-year of our money, when he was enfranchised in England in the time of Henry VI., had sunk by the change in the value of money sufficiently low even in that country; but in Ireland he had come to represent a class as different from the yeomen of England as darkness is from light. As every estate enjoyed for life constituted a freehold, the expedient was fallen upon of multiplying farms, or

rather crofts, worth forty shillings each, and giving the tenants a right in them for life, in order to increase the political influence of the owner of the estates. The situation of Ireland—without commerce or manufactures over the greater part of its surface, and consequently without outlets for the younger sons of the landholders—rendered this multiplication of voters a great object to the proprietors, because it promised to increase their influence at the Castle of Dublin, from whence commissions in the army or political appointments might flow. The priests cordially supported the same system, because, by multiplying the holders of land who had a bare subsistence and no more, it both increased their influence and enlarged the circle from which the heavy fees on marriages and births, the chief source of their income, were derived. Finally, the extension of the elective franchise to Catholics by Mr Pitt, in 1793, let in the whole cultivators of that persuasion to the suffrage—a portentous state of things in a country possessing at that period above a million of cultivators. It is a curious but instructive circumstance, that the greatest misfortunes of Ireland in recent times have arisen from the extension to its inhabitants of the most highly-prized privileges of English subjects, and for which her own patriots had most warmly and resolutely contended.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1828, 122, 123; Martineau, i. 472.

113. The Catholic Association gets the complete command of the forty-shilling freeholders.

Mr O'Connell, and the other able leaders of the Catholic Association, saw the advantage which this state of things would afford them, and prepared to turn it to the best advantage. He did not destroy the battery, but seized it, and turned its guns against the enemy. Hitherto the landowners had entirely directed the votes of their tenantry, and both would not have been more surprised if the mountains had fallen, or the earth opened beneath their feet, than if any separation had taken place between them. But now the fatal effects of the domination of a foreign power over the priesthood at once appeared. In obedience to orders received from Rome,

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and communicated through the Catholic hierarchy, the clergy of that persuasion everywhere set themselves with the utmost vigour to aid the efforts of the Association. In Mr Sheil's words, one of their ablest supporters, "every altar became a tribune." Those who were slow in the work, or leagued with the enemy, were denounced in all the churches as enemies to God and His Anointed. Immense was the effect of this new engine applied to the human mind. The inflammatory harangues of the itinerant orators, who were sent down into every part of the country by the Catholic Association, were aided by the still more powerful voice which issued from the altar, and proclaimed the rewards of heaven to those who engaged in the good fight, the pains of hell to such as were backward in the cause of the true faith. The effect of this, and of the admirable organisation which, by means of the hierarchy and local clergy, the Church of Rome had established over the whole country, and their unbounded influence over their flocks, was, that the entire peasantry of Ireland were prepared, at the next election, to vote for the candidate of the Association in opposition to their landlords; and all other influences were utterly swept away.[1]

[1] Martineau, i. 472; Ann. Reg. 1828, 122, 123.

114. Mr O'Connell elected for the county of Clare.

The first trial of the new system was made in the county of Clare, on occasion of the vacancy occasioned by the acceptance by Mr Vesey Fitzgerald of the office of President of the Board of Trade under the Duke of Wellington's administration. It proved eminently successful. There was no impediment by the existing law to a Roman Catholic sitting in either House of Parliament, excepting the oaths to be taken by persons elected before they took their seat, which were purposely intended to exclude persons of that persuasion, and had hitherto effectually done so. Mr O'Connell, however, whose reputation as a lawyer deservedly stood very high in Ireland, pledged himself and his legal character that he would sit and vote in the English House without

taking the oaths; and in this he was supported by the elaborate written opinion of Mr Butler, an eminent English Catholic conveyancer. Fortified by this authority, Mr O'Connell presented himself as a candidate for the county of Clare, and the whole Catholic influence of Ireland was immediately brought to bear on its electors. Mr Fitzgerald was the sitting member—a Whig, an advocate of Catholic emancipation, a Cabinet Minister, and supported warmly by the whole body of proprietors, by whom he was much beloved. All these influences, however, which in former times would have been all-powerful, were blown to the winds by the first blast of the Catholic Association. Its emissaries and the priests traversed the county in every direction. Night and day the work of agitation went on—crowds assembled in every church, around every chapel: if an orator arrived at dead of night, he was surrounded by a crowd in five minutes. Nothing was thought of, nothing done, but the work of agitation. When the election began, Mr O'Connell was proposed by O'Gorman Mahon, the secretary of the Association. Bands of electors, escorted by excited crowds headed by their priests, came pouring in from all quarters—all old influences and connections were snapped asunder, all former obligations forgotten. The result was, that, after a few days' polling, Mr Fitzgerald retired from the contest, and Mr O'Connell was declared duly elected. An objection taken to his return, upon the ground of his being a Roman Catholic, was rightly overruled by the assessor, upon the ground that there was nothing to hinder a Roman Catholic sitting in Parliament except the taking of the test, and that it could not be anticipated *ab ante* that he would refuse to do so.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1828, 123, 129; Martineau, i. 472, 473; Hughes, vii. 174, 175.

115. Immense results of this triumph.

Vast was the sensation produced by this victory, not in Ireland merely, but over the whole empire. The Catholics were everywhere in raptures. Mr O'Connell was lauded to the skies as a saviour, a deliverer; and in the first moments of his triumph he boasted, apparently

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with reason, that at the next election he would displace eight-and-twenty county and borough members, and return such a majority of Catholics as would "make the Great Captain start," and compel a recognition of their rights even from a reluctant House of Peers. The Catholic Association had never been proceeded against under the Act of Parliament intended to put it down, from the certainty that the unhappy requisite of unanimity in the jury would cause any prosecution, how well founded soever, to fail; and now, after having gained such a victory, it became more audacious than ever, and was, in truth, the governing power in the country. The Catholics became so threatening, they met so often, and in such enormous masses, that the Orangemen in the north, justly alarmed, organised themselves in a counter-defensive league, which was immediately denounced in the most violent terms by the Roman Catholics. It is a curious circumstance, that none are so alive to the dangers of any proceedings, or declaim against them so violently, as those who are engaged in, or prepared to set about, similar acts themselves.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1828, 129, 130; Martineau, i. 474.

116. Mr Lawless's progress to the north.

So bold did the Catholic leaders become, and so fully did they rely on the number and organisation of their followers, that one of the most unscrupulous of their number, *Mr Lawless*, openly boasted that he would beard the lion in his den, and enter the strongholds of the Orange party in the north at the head of fifty thousand Catholics. In effect, he *did* enter several Protestant towns, at the head of thirty thousand, banded, and marching in military array. This so roused the Orangemen that they mustered in similar numbers, and on the day on which he had announced his intention of entering Armagh, they were assembled in its vicinity in such numbers that he was obliged to turn aside and desist from his purpose. He proceeded to Ballybay in Monaghan, which he entered, according to his own account, at the head of 250,000 followers, and who perhaps might amount

to a fifth of the number. So sturdy, however, was the resistance of the Protestants, that it led to bloodshed in some quarters; and the Catholic Association, not deeming things sufficiently advanced, issued orders to stop these tumultuous assemblages, which order was immediately and universally obeyed: so complete was the discipline and organisation of the country under their orders. Meanwhile crime everywhere diminished and agrarian outrages disappeared, insomuch that the judges everywhere congratulated the grand juries upon the unprecedented lightness of the calendar!—A perilous and portentous state of things, when faction and party spirit have gained such a command of a country that it has fettered even the tendency to crime itself, and turned outrage, from separate acts, into one united volume to overwhelm the State.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1828, 135, 140; Martineau, 476, 479.

117. Mr Sheil's description of Ireland at this period.

The condition of Ireland at this period was described with not less truth than eloquence, in a speech delivered by Mr Sheil, a leading orator of the Catholics in the Association in Dublin, in the end of September. "The Catholics," he said, "have attained the perfection of national organisation; they have almost reached the excellence of military array. But an immense population, thus united, thus affiliated, thus controlled, in such a state of complete subordination, affords matter of the most solemn meditation. A feeling of expectation has begun to manifest itself among the people; they put painful questions. But if the state of the Catholics be deserving of attention, that of the Protestants calls also for remark. It is in vain for us to hide it from ourselves. The Protestants are becoming every day more alienated by our display of power. The great proprietors, and all who have an influence in the State, are anxious for a settlement of the question; but still their pride is wounded, and they see with some disrelish the attitude of just equality which we have assumed. Our Protestant advocates, with some exceptions, declined to attend our late meetings. As individuals, I hold them in no sort of account; but their

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absence is a feature in the existing circumstances of the country. It is clear that the division between Catholic and Protestant is widening. They were before parted, but they are now rent asunder; and while the Catholic Association rises up from the indignant passions of one great section of the community, the 'Brunswick Club' is springing out of the irritated pride and sectarian rancour of the Protestants of Ireland. The Catholic Association owes its parentage to heavy wrong operating on deeply sensitive and strongly susceptible feelings. The Protestant Association has its birth in the hereditary love of power and inveterate habits of domination. These two great rivals are brought into political existence, and enter the lists against each other. As yet they have not engaged in the great struggle—they have not closed in the combat; but as they advance upon each other, and collect their might, it is easy to discern the terrible passions by which they are influenced, and the full determination with which they rush to the encounter. Meanwhile the Government stand by, and the Minister folds his arms, as if he were a mere indifferent observer, and the terrific contest only afforded him a spectacle for the amusement of his official leisure. He sits as if two gladiators were crossing their swords for his recreation. *The Cabinet seems to be little better than a box in an amphitheatre, from whence his Majesty's Ministers may survey the business of blood.*"[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1828, 140, 141.

118. The Catholic Association interferes to moderate the transports.

At length appearances became so threatening, especially in Tipperary, where the people were on the verge of insurrection, that the able leaders of the Association, who were aware how soon they would be crushed in the field by the military strength of England, deemed it necessary to interfere to moderate the movement. Notwithstanding all their boasts, they were well aware that their millions would only be an incumbrance in the field, from the impossibility of arming or feeding such multitudes. "In a week," said Mr Sheil, "they would cut us down." It was wisely resolved, therefore, to postpone the insurrection

which had been so often threatened, and trust only to agitation, and the display of vehement popular excitement. The Association accordingly passed resolutions condemning the meetings lately held in Tipperary, "*humbly imploring*" the Catholic clergy to co-operate with them in carrying this resolution into effect; calling on Mr O'Connell to exert his deserved influence over the people of Tipperary, in deterring them from holding such meetings. He immediately obeyed the injunction, and issued an address to the people of the county of Tipperary, conjuring them to discontinue these alarming assemblages.* Such was the influence which he possessed with the peasantry, and so perfect the system of organisation and discipline to which, under the direction of their priests, they had been brought, that a vast assemblage of not less than fifty thousand persons in Tipperary, arrayed in uniform equipments, with flags and drums, was arrested by single messengers of the Association, bearing copies of his address, who met the bodies which were pouring into the town. In one place only, at Castletown, where they were not so met, a collision took place with the police, the barracks were attacked, and the police obliged to seek safety in flight.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1828, 141, 143; Martineau, i. 477, 478.

119. Proclamation of Government against the meetings, Oct. 1, 1828.

Encouraged by this movement on the part of their opponents, the Cabinet at length gave symptoms of life. On 1st October a proclamation came forth from the Lord-Lieutenant, enjoining that to be done which the Association had already enjoined to be done for them. Meetings such as those which had taken place in Tipperary

* "Obey the laws; follow the advice of the Catholic Association; listen to the counsels I will give you; discontinue those large meetings; avoid secret societies and illegal oaths; contribute according to your means to that sacred and national fund the Catholic Rent; cultivate your moral duties; attend seriously and solemnly to your holy and divine religion. You will then exalt yourselves as men and Christians. Bigotry and oppression will wither from amongst us. *A parental Government, now held out to us, will compensate for centuries of misrule.* I adjure you, however great may be your irritation, not to commit any breach of the peace, which is just the very thing by which your enemies would be delighted, and which would rive the hearts of your friends with unutterable agony."—*Mr O'Connell's Address*, Sept. 26, 1828; *Ann. Reg.* 1828, 142.

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were denounced as illegal, and the magistrates were called on to suppress them. It was unnecessary. The meetings had already disappeared at a more powerful voice—that of Mr O'Connell. Mr Lawless was held to bail for his heading of the Monaghan meeting, but no ulterior proceedings were adopted. With such success were the efforts of the Association and Mr O'Connell to regulate the movement attended, that early in October he said, at a meeting of the Association: "We had taken care to render Tipperary so tranquil that a single policeman was scarcely required to preserve the peace. There the proclamation of Government was issued, but we had quieted the country before it came forth, and the Government but heel-tapped the work which had already been done by the Catholic Association." [1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1828, 141; Martineau, i. 478.

120. Meeting on Penenden Heath. Oct. 24.

These proceedings in Ireland, and, above all, the decisive evidence which had been afforded of the entire and thorough control which the leaders of the Catholics had obtained over the whole body, excited the greatest alarm in England; and the friends of the Protestants condemned Government in no measured terms for permitting the agitation to go on, and not at once putting it down by the arrest and trial of its leaders. Meetings were held in various places to give expression to this feeling; and one on Penenden Heath, in Kent, on October 1, was so remarkable as to deserve especial notice. It was attended by twenty thousand persons, for the most part of a very superior class; and a motion condemnatory of the proceedings in Ireland, and expressing their "inviolable attachment to those Protestant principles which have proved to be the best security for the civil and religious liberty of the kingdom," was carried on the motion of the Earl of Winchelsea, seconded by Sir E. Knatchbull, the county member, by a large majority. Similar meetings were held in Leeds, Leicester, and other places.[2] These meetings immediately became the object of the most violent abuse by the whole Catholic party in Eng-

[2] Ann. Reg. 1828, 145.

land and Ireland, who unhesitatingly condemned that as treason and revolution which was only a slight imitation of their own example.

121. The King in vain urges more vigorous measuresagainst the Catholics.

If Ireland, however, was thus falling into a state of pacific anarchy and smothered insurrection, to which there is perhaps no parallel to be found in any other age or country, it was not without the most vigorous opposition on the part of the chief magistrate of the State that the change was going forward. The King strongly urged the adoption of decisive measures against the Roman Catholics. He disapproved of the Association Bill as too inefficient, and, in particular, impressed upon his Ministers his opinion of the necessity of acting decidedly on occasion of Mr Lawless's crusade into the north of Ireland in the autumn of 1848. So strongly was his Majesty's opinion expressed on this point, that he afterwards said to Lord Eldon, in a confidential interview, "that everything was revolutionary; that the condition of Ireland had not been taken into consideration; that the Association Bill had passed both Houses before he had seen it; that it was a very inefficient measure, compared to those which he had himself in vain recommended; that he had frequently suggested the necessity of putting down the Roman Catholic Association, and suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, especially at the time that Lawless made his march; that he was in the condition of a person with a pistol presented to his breast; that he had nothing to fall back upon; that he had been deserted by the aristocracy who had supported his father; and that everything was tending to revolution." [1]

[1] Eldon's Life, iii. 83, 84.

122. Difficulties with which the question was beset.

But although the King thus felt and spoke as became a king of England, and with the hereditary courage of his race, when he urged a more vigorous course upon his Ministers, yet they, being charged with the execution of the laws, had a very different task to perform, and were beset with difficulties which were not so obvious to one in his exalted station. They had to consider, not merely what

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was in itself wise, and, *if practicable*, would at once have remedied the existing disorders, but what was really practicable under existing circumstances. They experienced now the force of the eternal truth, that a constitutional monarchy, when united the strongest, is, when disunited, the weakest of all governments. So divided was not only Ireland, but Great Britain, upon this question, that it had become more than doubtful whether any means of coercion really remained to the executive. The unhappy extension of English institutions to a people wholly unsuited for their reception, had rendered Government in Ireland almost powerless. If prosecutions were tried, the necessity of unanimity in juries, in a country where it was hopeless to expect it, rendered it almost certain they would fail. If a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was attempted, it was more than doubtful whether, in a House of Commons now equally divided on the Catholic question, it would be carried; and if carried, it was quite certain that its execution would give rise to endless heats and animosities. O'Connell was already powerful enough; there was no need of augmenting his sway by stretching out to him the crown of martyrdom. If a dissolution was resorted to, an increase of anti-Catholic members might be expected in Great Britain; but would they not be more than neutralised by thirty or forty seats which would certainly be changed in Ireland, and, under the newborn influence of the priesthood, filled with the most violent Romish revolutionists? It was quite certain that the Liberals of every shade would unite together, both in and out of Parliament, to keep alive the agitation in both islands, and drive home a wedge in the Cabinet by which they hoped to split asunder the Administration, and terminate the ascendancy of Tory counsels in the Government. Even the army, if matters came to extremities, was not to be entirely relied on; for although the fidelity of the officers in every arm might confidently be trusted, and the cavalry, almost entirely composed of

Englishmen, and the artillery of Scotchmen, would certainly adhere to their duty, yet defections might take place in the infantry, two-thirds of which was composed of Irishmen; and the history of the Continental states during the last half-century contained too many proofs of the fatal results to which the treachery of a single regiment might lead.

123. Commencement of yielding in the Cabinet. July and August.

These difficulties strongly presented themselves to the Cabinet ministers, and especially the Duke of Wellington, whose mind, eminently practical and sagacious, had been trained, amidst the ever-changing vicissitudes of military warfare, to abandon old positions, and take up new ones when the former had become untenable, and who looked rather to the real and lasting interests of the State than to the individual consistency or reputation of the public men intrusted with its defence. From the time, accordingly, that the Catholic Association had become so formidable, and the Clare election had proved how powerfully it might be brought to bear on the majority in Parliament, the necessity of "settling the question," as it was called—that is, conceding all the demands of the Catholics—had been secretly discussed in the Cabinet, and plans regarding it submitted to the King. His Majesty, however, was immovable, and not only manifested the utmost repugnance to any concession, but again and strongly urged the adoption of vigorous coercive measures against the Romish agitators. Beset thus with difficulties on all sides, the Ministers determined on feeling their way with the country, and for this purpose putting forward a confidential agent, whose words, if imprudent or unsuccessful, might be disavowed by the Government. This expedient, so well known in the diplomacy of despotic states, and more easily vindicated on grounds of expedience or necessity than either integrity or honour, was early resorted to; and the person selected was Mr Dawson, one of the members for the county of Londonderry, brother-in-law to Sir R. Peel, and holding office

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under Government. The time and place chosen was a public dinner given at Londonderry, on the 12th August, to celebrate the defence of that city against the Catholic arms of James II.

124. Mr Dawson's speech at Londonderry.

Mr Dawson said on this occasion: "The state of Ireland is an anomaly in the history of civilised nations. It is true we have a government to which an outward show of obedience is given, which is responsible to Parliament, and answerable to God for the manner of administering its functions; but it is equally true that an immense majority of the people look up, not to the legitimate Government, but to an irresponsible and self-constituted Association, for the administration of the affairs of the country. The peace of Ireland depends, not upon the government of the King, but upon the dictation of the Catholic Association. It has defied the Government, and trampled upon the law of the land; and it is beyond contradiction, that the same power which banished a Cabinet minister from the representation of his county, because he was a minister of the King, can maintain or disturb the peace of the country, just as it suits the caprice or ambition of those who exert it. The same danger impends over every institution established by law. The Church enjoys its dignity, and the clergy their revenues, by the laws of the land; and we know not how soon the Catholic Association may issue its anathemas against the payment of tithes; and what man is hardy enough to say the Catholic people will disobey its mandates? It depends on the Catholic Association whether the clergy receive their incomes or not. The condition of the landlords is not more consoling. Already they have become ciphers on their estates; in many places they have become, worse still, the tools of their domineering masters, the Catholic priesthood: and it depends upon a single breath, a single resolution, of the Catholic Association, whether they are robbed of their rents or not. So perfect an organisation was never yet achieved by any

body not possessing the legitimate power of government. It is powerful, it is arrogant, it derides, it has triumphed over the enactments of the legislature, and it goes on filling its coffers from the voluntary contributions of the people. There is but one alternative—either to crush the Association, or to look at the question with an intention to settle it. *The latter is the course I prefer;* the former is neither practicable nor desirable."[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1828, 130, 132.

125. Ambiguous letter of the Duke of Wellington, and explicit one of the Lord-Lieutenant.

This speech, coming from the quarter it did, made an immense sensation. The Catholics shouted victory; the Protestants, amazed and dejected, could only express their indignation in impotent declamation. Such was the consternation produced, that Mr Dawson was disavowed, and deprived of his situation. It soon appeared, however, from still higher authority, that some settlement of the question was in the contemplation of the Cabinet. Dr Curtis, titular Catholic Primate of Ireland, who, when in a situation at Salamanca, had been intimate with the Duke of Wellington during his Peninsular campaigns, addressed a letter to his Grace on the state of Ireland, to which he returned an answer, in terms cautious indeed, but indicating, not obscurely, an intention to concede emancipation.* This letter was carried by Dr Curtis to a meeting of the Catholic Association, where it was received with tumultuous applause, and universally considered as an indication on the part of the Government to yield. A still more unequivocal symptom of the same disposition appeared, a few days afterwards, in a letter of the Marquess of Anglesea, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland,

* "I have received your letter of 4th December; and I assure you that you do me justice in believing that I am sincerely anxious to witness the settlement of the Roman Catholic question, which, by benefiting the State, would confer a benefit on every individual belonging to it. But I confess that I see no prospect of such a settlement. Party has been mixed up with the consideration of the question to such a degree, and such violence pervades every discussion of it, that it is impossible to expect to prevail upon men to consider it dispassionately. If we could bury it in oblivion for a short time, and employ that time diligently in the consideration of its difficulties on all sides (for they are very great), *I should not despair of seeing a satisfactory result.*"—WELLINGTON *to* Dr CURTIS, Dec. 11, 1828; *Ann. Reg.* 1828, p. 149.

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to Dr Curtis, on receiving a copy of the Duke's letter, in which emancipation was openly spoken of as the only means of pacifying Ireland.* Whatever the views of the Cabinet were at this period, this letter went beyond them; and it was deemed necessary to mark the disapproval of it by a very decided measure. The next post brought the recall of Lord Anglesea from the government of Ireland, and the appointment of the Duke of Northumberland in his stead.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1828, 149, 151; Martineau, i. 479, 480.

126. Increased violence of the Catholic leaders.

But whatever vacillation the Cabinet may have experienced at this juncture, there was none evinced by the leaders of the Catholics. On the contrary, the more that disunion appeared in the ranks of their adversaries, the more united did they become, and the more loudly did they proclaim their determination to abate in nothing from their claims, to accept of no compromise, to take everything that was offered, but agitate unceasingly for

* "I venture to offer my opinion upon the course which it behoves the Catholics to pursue. Perfectly convinced that the final and cordial settlement of this great question can alone give peace, harmony, and prosperity to *all* classes of his Majesty's subjects in this kingdom, I must acknowledge my disappointment on learning that there is no prospect of its being effected during the present session of Parliament. I, however, derive great satisfaction from observing, that his Grace is not wholly averse to the measure; for, if he can be induced to promote it, he of all men will have the greatest facility in carrying it into effect. . . . I differ from the opinion of the Duke, that an attempt should be made to 'bury in oblivion' the question for a short time. First, because the thing is utterly impossible; and, next, if the thing were possible, I fear that advantage might be taken of the pause, by representing it as a panic achieved by the late violent reaction, and by proclaiming that, if the Government at once and peremptorily decided against concession, the Catholics would cease to agitate, and then all the miseries of the last years in Ireland will be to be reacted. What I do recommend is, that the measure should not be for a moment lost sight of; that anxiety should continue to be manifested; that all constitutional (in contradiction to merely legal) means should be resorted to, to forward the cause; but that, at the same time, the most patient forbearance, the most submissive obedience to the laws, should be inculcated; that no personal and offensive language should be held towards those who oppose the claims. Let the Catholic trust to the justice of his cause, and the growing liberality of mankind. It is the legislature which must decide this question; and my greatest anxiety is, that it should be met by the Parliament under the most favourable circumstances, and that the opposers of Catholic emancipation should be disarmed by the patient forbearance, as well as the unwearied perseverance, of its advocates."—Marquess of Anglesea *to* Dr Curtis, 23d Dec. 1828; *Ann. Reg.* 1828, p. 150, note.

the remainder. "The detailed paltry question of political discount," said Mr O'Connell, "shall not be listened to. We despise, we abhor it. We degraded ourselves by such a traffic before, and it would be double delinquency to assent to it again. I therefore want that we should pledge ourselves to have unqualified emancipation, or nothing at all. I don't care if the Government bring in a bill for our relief unconnected with any existing privileges. *We will take anything they give us.* They owe us twenty-eight shillings in the pound. Let them give us fifteen shillings in the pound; *we will proceed against them for the remainder.* We'll take the instalment, and demand the residue with greater earnestness. I'll not object to any bill for our emancipation, if we were only to look at it; for since the abominable Union we have not gotten the least increase of our rights. I am not therefore opposed to partial relief; all I say is, that I shall oppose any bargain or absurd securities with all my force. I myself may be taunted with consenting to the measure called 'the Wings,' for disfranchising the forty-shilling freeholders in 1825. I know that I deserve that reproach; and I answer to those who assail me, that the only way in which I can atone for my error is, by a firm and determined opposition to any encroachments hereafter. *Sooner than give up the forty-shilling freeholders, I would go back to the penal code.* They form part of the constitution: their right is as sacred as that of the King to the throne, and it would be treason against the people to make any attempt to disfranchise them. I am loyal to the throne; but if an attempt were made to disfranchise the forty-shilling freeholders, I would conceive it just to *resist that attempt with force,* and in such resistance I would be ready to perish in the field or on the scaffold." In pursuance of this principle, the Association unanimously passed a resolution "that they would deem any attempt to deprive the forty-shilling freeholders of their franchise a direct violation of the

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constitution." "The Duke of Wellington," said Mr Sheil, "could not adopt a plan more calculated to throw the country in a blaze than such an atrocious attempt at spoliating the rights of the Irish people. I trust he will not pursue this course; but if he should, I tell him we would rather submit for ever to the pressure of the parricidal code, which crushed our fathers to the grave, than assent to this robbery of a generous peasantry's privileges."[1]

[1] Mr O'Connell and Mr Sheil's speeches, Dec. 16, 1828, and Nov. 19; Ann. Reg. 1828, 146, 147.

127. Difficulties which Ministers had with the King on the subject.

While the nation was in a state of the most anxious suspense from these alternate indications of policy, and all eyes were turned towards the meeting of Parliament, when something definite might be expected on the subject, the Cabinet was not only at first divided in regard to it, but they experienced, when they became united, the most strenuous opposition on the part of the Sovereign to any concession. The Duke of Wellington was the first of the anti-Catholic party in the Cabinet who became convinced of the necessity of yielding, and when he first communicated his views to Mr Peel, the latter acquiesced in them, but declared his intention of resigning both his situation in the Cabinet and his seat for Oxford. It would have been well for his reputation if he had adhered entirely to his first impression; but he was induced to forego it,* upon the representation that it

* "I know well that all personal feelings must be subordinate to the public good; but I cannot help feeling, at the same time, that my own position was materially different from that of any other Minister, and I would willingly have retired from that interference in the settlement of the question which now devolved upon me. In the course of the discussions, however, connected with the consideration of this subject, my noble friend (Wellington) said that my retirement would greatly embarrass him; and this being the case, and it having been proved to my satisfaction that the difficulties in the way of settling the question would be increased if I pressed my retirement, I said to my noble friend, that if such was likely to be the consequence, no consideration should induce me to urge my own personal wishes, but that I was ready to uphold, in my place, a measure which I was firmly convinced had now become necessary. My noble friend has done everything in his power to render the measure about to be proposed satisfactory to all parties; neither had he, in the consideration of this measure, been at all intimidated by the proceedings of the Catholic Association. My noble friend had felt it to be his duty to advise his Majesty to resort to the proposed measure, and would not allow

would be a dereliction of duty to desert his Sovereign and the prime-minister on a crisis like the present, when that Sovereign was probably suffering more than any of his confidential servants. He contented himself, therefore, though with great reluctance, with resigning his seat for Oxford, and consented to bring in the bill into the House of Commons. The Cabinet was then united on the subject; but when they came to the King they experienced the utmost resistance. George IV., with all his faults, possessed much of his father's firmness of character and penetration of mind, and he inherited all his convictions on the vital importance of Protestant principles towards the maintenance of his family on the throne. The Cabinet, however, were united and firm, and twice over tendered their resignation if not permitted to bring in a measure which they deemed essential to the public welfare, and, in fact, of absolute necessity. Thus pressed, and being aware of the impossibility of forming an anti-Catholic cabinet, or, if formed, of obtaining for it a majority in the House of Commons, the King, after much struggling, and with the greatest pain, gave a reluctant consent to the measure. He did so, however, still clinging to the hope that in the interim the country would be so much roused on the subject as to enable him to avert the dreaded blow, or possibly authorise him to put his constitutional veto upon the whole measure.[1] *

[1] Eldon's Life, iii. 83; Mr Peel's Explanation, Parl. Deb. xx. 87, 88.

any imputations which he felt to be unjust to influence his conduct. To myself, the adoption of this measure has been a most painful sacrifice. I have done all in my power to free myself from any engagements which might prevent me from exercising the most unfettered judgment on this vital question. I considered the path which led to a satisfactory settlement of it to be, under all the circumstances of the country, the course most free from peril; and whatever part I may have taken on former occasions with respect to this question, I considered it perfectly reconcilable with my duty, as a member of that House and a servant of the Crown, to do all I could to fulfil the solemn injunction of his Majesty to consider this question, involving so deeply not only the best feelings of the people, but the tranquillity of the United Kingdom."—See Sir R. PEEL's Speech, Feb. 5, 1829; *Parl. Deb.* xx. 87.

* The King's own account of the matter to Lord Eldon was as follows: "That at the time the Administration was formed, no reason was given him to suppose that any measure for the relief of the Roman Catholics was in contemplation;

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123. King's speech. Feb. 5, 1829.

At length Parliament met, and the speech from the throne contained the following passage: "His Majesty laments that in that part of the United Kingdom an Association still exists which is dangerous to the public peace and inconsistent with the spirit of the constitution, which keeps alive discord and ill-will among his Majesty's subjects, and which must, if permitted to continue, effectually obstruct every effort permanently to improve the condition of Ireland. His Majesty confidently relies on the wisdom and on the support of his Parliament, and he feels assured that you will commit to him such powers as may enable his Majesty to maintain his just authority. His Majesty recommends that, when this essential object shall have been accomplished, you should take into your deliberate consideration the whole condition of Ireland, and that you should review the laws which impose disabilities on his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects. You will consider whether the removal of these disabilities can be effected consistently with the full and permanent security of our establishments in Church and State, with the maintenance of the reformed religion established by law, and of the rights and privileges of the bishops and of the clergy of this realm, and of the churches committed to their charge."[1] A few days after, a bill was brought in for the suppression of the Catholic Association, and vested in the Lord-Lieutenant,

Feb. 10. [1] Parl. Deb. xx. 4, 5; Ann. Reg. 1829, 6, 8.

that he had frequently himself suggested the absolute necessity of putting down the Roman Catholic Association, of suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, to destroy the power of the most seditious and rebellious of the members of it, particularly at the time when Lawless began his march; that instead of following what he so strongly recommended, after some time, not long before the commencement of the present session, he was applied to, to allow his Ministers to propose to him, as a united Cabinet, the opening of Parliament, by sending such a message as his speech contained; that after much struggling against it, and after the measure had been pressed upon him as an *absolute necessity*, he had consented that the Protestant members of his Cabinet, *if they could so persuade themselves to act*, might join in such a representation to him, but that he would not then, nor in his recommendation to Parliament, pledge himself to anything. He repeatedly mentioned that he represented to his Ministers *the infinite pain it gave him to consent even to that.*"—*Lord Eldon's Life*, iii. 83.

to exercise that power whenever it should seem to him expedient to do so.

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Immense was the sensation which this speech created in the country: nothing had been witnessed like it since the Revolution which dethroned James II. The Catholics were comparatively quiescent both in Great Britain and Ireland; they had gained the day in the mean time, and awaited the proper season for ulterior proceedings. The bill for the suppression of the Catholic Association passed both Houses without any opposition. Not so the Protestants. Deserted, and, as they deemed themselves, betrayed, by those to whom they had hitherto looked up as their natural guardians, they everywhere broke out into the fiercest demonstrations, the most gloomy prophecies of ruin, if the threatened measure were carried into effect. The staunchest of the Tory press commenced the most violent attacks on the Government, which they accused of treachery, cowardice, and desertion of their most sacred duties to their country. Sir Charles Wetherall, the Attorney-General, made, while *still holding office*, the most withering and impassioned harangue against the Ministry, and especially Mr Peel, the avowed leader of the anti-Catholic party. The country quickly and energetically answered the appeal. From all quarters petitions against the Roman Catholics poured into both Houses; and it was soon apparent that, if the matter were to be decided by a numerical majority of the whole inhabitants of the country, or if the House of Commons were a real representation of the feelings of the people, the bill would at once be thrown out by a large majority. Mr Peel honourably resigned his seat for Oxford, and was defeated, in his attempt to be re-elected, by Sir R. Inglis, after a keen and protracted contest, by a majority of 146 out of 1364 voters. "The strength of the anti-Catholic party," says Miss Martineau, "as shown in the petitions, was great; but in the House of Commons it was not so."[1] The same reason which had

129. Immense sensation which this speech excited in the country.

[1] Martineau, i. 499; Ann. Reg. 1829, 7, 13; Parl. Deb. xx. 146, 178, 519, 573.

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caused the conversion of the Administration caused that of their adherents generally, and the power of argument was all on one side."

130. Argument of Mr Peel in favour of the Catholics.

The bill for the suppression of the Catholic Association having passed both Houses, and received the royal assent, leave to bring in the bill for the concession of the Roman Catholic claims was moved for in the House of Commons by Mr Peel, in an uncommonly full house. The argument urged was to the following effect: "The subject is surrounded by many difficulties, but the time has now arrived when the amicable adjustment of the question would be attended with less danger than any other which I could suggest. On that opinion I am prepared to act, unchanged by any expression of an opposite opinion, however general or deep, unchanged by the forfeiture of political confidence, or by the heavy loss of private friendship. In 1825, when the bill passed the Commons, I intimated to Lord Liverpool my desire to resign in order to facilitate the adjustment of the question, and was prevailed on not to do so only by the assurance that it would dissolve the Ministry. In 1828, when the bill was again passed, I intimated a similar wish to the Duke of Wellington, with the addition that, seeing the current of public opinion, I was ready to sacrifice consistency and friendship, and support the measure, provided it was undertaken on principles consistent with the safety of the Protestant Establishment. I am aware that it is incumbent on me to make out a case for this change of policy, and that case is made out from the following considerations.

131. Continued.

"Matters cannot continue as they are: the evils of divided councils are so great that something must be done, and a Government must be formed with a united opinion on the subject. Secondly, a united Government must do one of two things; it must either grant further political rights to the Catholics, or recall those which they already possess. But, thirdly, to deprive the

Catholics of what they already possess would be impossible, or, at least, would be infinitely more mischievous than to grant them more; and therefore no course really remains but that of concession. That something must be done to enable the King to form a united ministry, is proved by the mischievous influence which the diversity of opinion on the subject has had on the general government of the country, the state of Parliament, and the government of Ireland. For thirty-five years the state of government in this country, on the Catholic question, has been that of disunion. Lord Fitzwilliam had gone to Ireland as Lord-Lieutenant in 1794, and his government came to a termination on account of a difference about the Catholic question. Mr Pitt's administration came to a close in 1801 on the same ground. After his death the Whigs came in, and their ministry, after enduring eighteen months, was terminated still on the same ground—a difference about the Catholic question. During Mr Percival's administration, resistance to the Catholics was the principle of Government; but this was out of deference to the feelings of his late Majesty; for Mr Canning and Lord Castlereagh, who both supported emancipation, were members of this Cabinet. Since 1812, the Catholic question has been what is called neutral; that is, every member of the Cabinet adopts the view on it which accords with his own opinion. The Cabinet have been always nearly, sometimes exactly, balanced; and this was also the case with the Lord-Lieutenant and Secretary, the Attorney and Solicitor General of Ireland, these being always on opposite sides. It need not be said to what consequence such a divided system of government must lead; it has defeated the best intentions of the Cabinet, paralysed the whole action of the executive, and brought Ireland to the very verge of ruin.

"The proceedings of the legislature are still more indicative of the paralysing influence of this divided state of opinion upon every part of the government. From

1832. Continued.

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the year 1807 to the present time there have been five successive parliaments, consequently five appeals to the great body of the people on this momentous question. The House elected for four of these parliaments has, on some occasion or other, generally more than once decided against the Catholics. The divisions have been generally very narrow, the majorities often not more than four or five. In 1813, the Catholic Relief Bill was carried by a majorty of forty-two in the Commons; in 1821, by one of nineteen; in 1828, by one of six. On the other hand, in 1816 the majority against the Catholics was thirty-one; in 1819, two; in 1827, four. At all these times the majority was fixed, generally thirty or forty, in the House of Peers. What has been the result of these repeated vacillations of the legislature on this vital question? Nothing but this, that each party has been able to paralyse the other in every measure connected with Ireland, that what has been gained one year has been lost the next, and that that unhappy country has been the seat of never-ending party conflicts, which have effectually blasted every attempt at social improvement, or the removal even of the most frightful and acknowledged evils. 'Sedemus desedis domi, inter nos altercantes, præsenti pace laeti, nec cernentes ex otio illo brevi multiplex bellum rediturum.'

133. Continued.

"The House of Commons, trembling in the nice balance of opinion, has at length inclined to the side of concession. Why should its decision not be considered as a fair representation of public opinion upon this great question? Nearly all the popular places, towns, and counties, are equally divided upon it—one member is for emancipation, and one against it. Again, if we look to this House, nearly all the rising talent which has appeared during the last fifteen years has been on the side of the Catholics. Session after session we have had defections from our side, but not a single convert. Are these indications to be neglected? Are they not just elements of consideration, to be weighed by those who

must calculate, if they are wise legislators, and, above all, if they are responsible ministers, to what extent resistance can be safely and wisely carried? Are the few who have borne the brunt of the battle for ten years to be taunted as responsible for failure?—are they not to consider what support they have had in the division, what assistance in the debate? It is within these walls that the question is really to be decided, and the victories of Penenden Heath are no compensation for defeat here. CHAP. XXI. 1829.

"If these are the evils with which the continual discussion of the subject is fraught in the Government and the Legislature, what has been the state of Ireland during these unfortunate dissensions? The dissensions of our councils, and the distractions of Ireland, if not standing in the relation of cause and effect, have at least been nearly concurrent; and there is no present prospect of the restoration of peace or tranquillity to Ireland, unless our own differences can in some way or other be reconciled. I will not prophesy what will be the ultimate effect of the measures which I propose, but the true recommendation of them I apprehend to be, that it is scarcely possible we can change for the worse. It is a melancholy fact that, since the year 1801, when the retirement of Mr Pitt brought this question prominently before the country, Ireland has been scarce ever governed by the ordinary law. The Insurrection Act, or some equally stringent coercive measure, has been in operation, with the exception scarcely of a single year, ever since the Union. Shall this state of things continue without some decisive effort at a remedy? Can anything be clearer than that the present state of things cannot continue, that the system of open governments and neutral questions must be abandoned, and that there is no safety except in the united councils and joint responsibility of the King's government? 134. Continued.

"If this be conceded, the only choice that remains is between permanent unqualified resistance to concession on

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the one side, and the settlement of the Catholic question on the other. There is no intermediate line to be discovered. Can, then, a government be formed on the principle

135. Continued.

of permanent unqualified resistance to the Catholics? Supposing it formed, how is it to govern Ireland? What is to be done with the Catholic Association? Suppress it, is the ready answer. Be it so. By what means? The existing state of the law provides no means for doing so; at least such is the unanimous opinion of the law officers both of England and Ireland. They have deprecated prosecution, either under the common law or the Act of 1793. The evil of such an Association is not of recent occurrence. In one form or another it has existed ever since 1793, and no administration has been able to devise a measure for its effectual suppression. Why, then, it is said, not pass a new law? Can that be done without the concurrence of the House of Commons?—and is there any prospect, in the present state of the House of Commons, of such a law being agreed to? If it was, is there the least chance, in the divided state of Ireland, of verdicts being obtained under it? Lord Eldon has declared 'that the Act recently passed will do nothing. That it has been said of the Act of 1825, that a coach-and-six might be driven through it; but he would engage to drive the meanest conveyance, even a donkey-cart, through the Act of 1829.'

136. Continued.

"But supposing all these difficulties overcome, another still greater remains behind. What is to be done with the elective franchise in Ireland? The new member for Oxford (Sir R. Inglis) has declared that, in the event of a general election, twenty-three counties in Ireland are prepared to follow the example of Clare. Be it so. What will be the result of such a change of seats upon the present nicely-balanced state of parties in the House of Commons? What will you do with that power, that tremendous power, which the elective franchise, exercised under the control of religion, at this moment confers upon

the Roman Catholics? Take away the franchise, it is said. But is this possible in a House in which two hundred and seventy-two members voted in a majority for a still greater extension of privileges to the Roman Catholics? There is no recourse against their decision but in an immediate appeal to the electors of Great Britain; and it is probable that, in such an event, an increased majority against the Roman Catholics will be obtained. But will Ireland be passive in the mean time? What will you do with the thirty or forty seats that will be changed in Ireland by the persevering efforts of the Irish agitators, directed by the Catholic Association, and carried out by the agency of every priest and bishop in Ireland?

137. Continued.

"Even if the Irish majority for the Catholics were to be overcome by the majority in Great Britain against them, can this compensate the dreadful evil of severing every remaining tie between the landlords and the Roman Catholic tenantry in Ireland; of confirming the spiritual ascendancy, in matters of faith, of the Roman Catholic clergy; of binding together, in a dangerous but not illegal exercise of a great constitutional right, the combined and desperate efforts of Roman Catholic wealth, intelligence, numbers, and religion? The infusion of such a body of representatives as Ireland would send to this House, under such circumstances, would be a real evil; but what is that in comparison of the impossibility of governing Ireland in opposition to such a united body as would then be banded together under the most complete priestly direction, and supported in the legislature by at least half the representatives of the United Kingdom?

138. Continued.

"We cannot replace the Roman Catholics in the position in which we found them. We have given them opportunities of acquiring education, wealth, and power; we have removed with our own hands the seal from the vessel in which a mighty spirit was enclosed; but it will

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not, like the genius in the fable, return within its narrow confines after having gratified our curiosity, and enable us to cast it back into the obscurity from which we evoked it. If we begin to recede, no limit can be assigned to our retrocession. We shall produce a violent reaction—violent in proportion to the hopes which have been excited. Fresh rigours will become necessary. The re-enactment of the penal code would be insufficient; we must abolish trial by jury, or at least incapacitate Catholics from sitting on juries. What can result from this but a more marked separation of the people of Ireland into distinct and hostile classes; a more entire monopoly of offices and power by the Protestants; a more unmixed and unqualified degradation of the Roman Catholics? How is this state of matters to go on in a country in which there are in all 5,000,000 of Catholics, and 2,000,000 of Protestants all congregated in the north-eastern parts of the island, and in the remaining three-fourths of which the Catholics are four to one, often twenty to one, compared to the Protestants?

139. Concluded.

"These are real and practical evils, which could not fail to be felt the moment that the system of resistance to the Catholics is resumed. But are there no contingent evils likely to arise, and still more to be dreaded? Is there no danger of rebellion and civil war? To go no farther back than 1798, the character of the rebellion in that year is written in the statute-book. The preamble of the statute which contributed to its suppression declared it to be 'a wicked rebellion, that desolates and lays waste the country by the most savage and wanton violence, excess, and outrage, which has utterly set at defiance the civil power, and has stopped the ordinary course of justice and of the common law.' The rebellion thus characterised was defeated by force; Government completely triumphed; but was there an end, in consequence, of the Catholic question? So far from it, Mr Pitt, before the dying embers of the Union were cold—before the ink of the

contract of union was dry—resigned office because he could not carry this very question of Catholic relief. Will the issue, even the successful issue, of civil war leave us in a better condition now than it left us in the year 1800? Shall we not, on the contrary, at its close have to discuss this same question of emancipation with bitter animosities, with a more imperious necessity for the adjustment of the question, and with a diminished chance of effecting it on safe and satisfactory principles? No doubt there are real difficulties in the way of a solution of the question by concession,—no man is more disposed to admit that than I am; but what great measure, which has stamped its name upon the era of its adoption, has been ever carried through without objections insuperable, if they had been abstractly considered? Our difficulties may be great, but they are as nothing compared with those which obstructed the great measure which united in one whole the two separate and hostile kingdoms into which this island was divided. We must contemplate the measure now proposed in the same spirit in which our ancestors acted under similar circumstances—we must look to the end to be achieved, and the danger to be avoided; we must be content to make mutual sacrifices, if they are essential to the attainment of a paramount object, and withdraw objections to separate parts of a comprehensive scheme, if, by insisting on these objections, we shall endanger its final accomplishment."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xx. 728, 756.

140. Answer of the anti-Catholics.

On the other hand, it was maintained by Sir Robert Inglis, Mr Bankes, and Mr Sadler: "Not one of the grounds stated in justification of the proposed measure will bear examination. The state of Ireland, the difficulty of governing the country with a divided cabinet, the impossibility of managing a House of Commons which left the Minister in a minority, the mischief consequent upon a division between the two branches of the legislature, are not imaginary evils; but the question is, Are they likely to be remedied by the measure now proposed? Is it not

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rather calculated to aggravate and enhance them? The distracted state of Ireland is unhappily too well known, and has been of too long continuance, to admit of any dubiety concerning it; but from what does it date? From the concession of political privileges to the Catholics in 1793, which has rendered the country ever since the arena of party contention, and a scene of turmoil, confusion, and bloodshed. The penal code was relaxed, the elective franchise extended to the Catholics, a university endowed for their education, the army and navy thrown open to their ambition. What has been the result? The rebellion of 1798, and thirty years of subsequent agitation and discord. Everything conceded, instead of lessening, has only added fuel to the flame. Every acquisition made has been converted into a platform from whence fresh attacks on the constitution have been directed. Guided by this experience, what are we to expect from throwing open the portals of the legislature to the entire Catholic body? What but this, that the advanced work now gained will become the salient angle from which the fire will be directed on the body of the fortress; and that the work of agitation, headed by the Romish leaders in either House of Parliament, will be renewed with increased vigour to effect the overthrow of the Protestant Establishment, the severance of the Union, the dismemberment of the British empire?

141. Continued.

"According to the confession of Ministers themselves, the Catholic Association, and organised agitation it kept up by means of the priests in the country, is one main ground for this concession. It had produced the disease for which they now professed themselves unable to find a remedy. Confessedly, also, not an attempt had been made to crush that aspiring convention. Acts had been passed by large majorities in Parliament to put down the Association, but Ministers allowed them to remain a dead letter. If the acts were defective, and incapable of execution, with whom did the responsibility of that lie but

with their own crown officers who drew up the bill? As to the argument founded on the divided state of the Cabinet, why did Arthur Duke of Wellington and Mr Peel, who declared that their opinion on the subject was unchanged, not try to convert their colleagues to their views, instead of themselves becoming the converted party; or, if they could not do this, look out for other colleagues? Surely they could not be fearful of being able to form a cabinet on the principle of exclusion, and therefore should never have struck their colours, under which there were no difficulties too great to surmount.

142. Continued.

"As to the dangers of a civil war, Ministers must have strangely mistaken the moral determination and force of public opinion in England, if they feared want of adequate support in conducting the contest. Besides, it was not a choice between civil war and concession, as far as the people of Ireland are concerned, but a far greater chance of civil war in Great Britain, if the Catholics are admitted, with their ambitious views, to the entire privileges of the constitution. At best it is only postponing the evil day; and it is for the House to consider under what different circumstances the attack could be resisted now, from those under which it would be possible to meet it when the Catholics possessed all the political immunities of the constitution. Unfortunately, the manner of concession is only a provocation to further attack. It is not the triumph of those who had long espoused the cause, gradually working their way by the power of opinion; it is the victory of force driving former enemies into desertion by intimidation. It openly told the Catholic agitators that they were too strong for the Government of Great Britain; that whatever they asked would be conceded, even to the giving up the constitution, provided only it was asked with sufficient clamour and violence. Ministers themselves did not venture to represent this measure as an act of grace, but as one which had been forced upon them by imperious necessity, many of them still retaining their

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former opinions, and having their eyes open to all the evils likely to result from the course they were pursuing. No rational man could expect that the Catholics and Catholic priesthood will remain contented even with what is now given. The entire re-establishment of their church will be the next object; it is not only their interest to contend for that object, but if they are good Catholics, they must regard it as a sacred duty, to the attainment of which the civil privileges now proposed to be conferred are chiefly valuable in their eyes as a means. Even Mr Peel seemed to anticipate at no distant period an ulterior struggle; and is it wisdom to prepare for a contest by clothing your enemy in new armour, and putting in his hands fresh weapons of offence?

143. Continued.

"The securities for the Church, of which so much is said, amount to nothing. What do they amount to? Nothing but the exclusion of the Catholics from two offices, all the power connected with which is *in reality* vested in other offices which the Catholics may fill. The Lord Chancellor may not be a Roman Catholic, but what avails that when the prime-minister and all the rest of the Cabinet may be of that persuasion? The prime-minister, who recommended all persons for bishoprics, might be a Catholic, and the influence of that faith might be exercised in the choice of persons who were to be forced on the Lord Chancellor by the rest of the Cabinet. The securities taken are just enough to fix a badge or mark on the Catholics, as belonging to an inferior sect, but for all practical purposes they are *perfectly* useless. Small as they are, they admit the existence of ulterior dangers; for if there are no dangers, why make any distinctions, or insist on any securities?

144. Continued.

"Why is this change in the constitution, subversive of the principles alike of the Reformation and the Revolution, to be forced upon the country in defiance of the opinions of the great majority of the people? No man can doubt that the preponderance of the anti-Catholics in

Great Britain is immense; the petitions bearing twenty and thirty thousand signatures, daily laid on the table of both Houses of Parliament, are a sufficient proof of this. If Ministers have any doubt of it, why not dissolve the House of Commons, and then it will at once be seen with whom the preponderance lies? Why is everything to be sacrificed to the Roman Catholics? And are the claims of the Protestants, at least four times their number in the United Kingdom, to be entirely overlooked? Mr Peel admits that, in the event of a dissolution, Great Britain would return an enlarged majority against the Catholics. What is this but admitting that the measure is forced through now, against the will of the inhabitants of this country? The election of 1826 was not a test of public opinion on this question, because the people then saw a Minister in power who, supported by the very men who now propose concession, would, it was known, resist it to the uttermost. Can anything be so inconsistent as to say in the same breath, 'We must grant emancipation, because a majority of four, in the present House so elected, have so determined; and we wont dissolve Parliament to ascertain what the feeling of the country, when fairly awakened to the subject, really is? Let them say at once they were determined to surrender the constitution, be the opinion of the country what it might; but let them not seek, in the divided state of parliamentary opinion regarding this measure, a false and flimsy excuse for capitulating, while they declined to adopt the only expedient by which a parliamentary opinion really in harmony with that of the country could be obtained.

145. Continued.

"The singular character of this measure is this: Its promoters themselves foresee the difficulties which will ultimately attend even their own policy. They themselves are aware that futurity is big with dangers as to its final consequences, but still, with a political cowardice which has seldom been equalled in the annals of the country (and which has always met its first recompense of punishment

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and shame wherever it has), it is proposed to transmit the momentary difficulties, which might be dissipated by dealing with them with a firm but kind hand, to another day—to postpone the conflict to our children, whom we are at this moment disarming of their constitutional rights, and sending to the struggle which awaits them, with a foe whose powers we are now thus increasing. We are surrendering the vantage-ground, dispossessing them of the position in which our ancestors placed us, in anticipation of this perpetual struggle with the enemy of our existing institutions.

146. Concluded.

"What, then, is the apology for this strange course, in which cowardice and apostasy are the avowed guides? It is *expediency*. This is the Alpha and Omega of the modern school—expediency as to the future character of our religious institutions! Expediency, based on religion and fortified by experience, is indeed the safest of all guides; but what is it when it purposely divests itself of both? It is the ready apology of the practised intriguer; the excuse of the ambitious slave; the justification of the inexorable tyrant; the life defence of the most unprincipled policy, the most heinous crimes that ever desolated the earth. And is this principle to supplant, in this hitherto Christian country, that safe, that necessary, that universal guide of human beings, in the most exalted as in the humblest walks of existence, a rule of right as inflexible as its Author, and which, like all His ordinations, however shrouded for a moment by doubts and difficulties, will ultimately resolve itself into benevolence, justice, and truth? History affords examples in every page, inscribed in the most appalling characters, of the just punishment which has ever awaited individuals, or bodies of men, or nations, following so selfish and tortuous a path. What did expediency do for France? Boundless felicity was promised by 'large and triumphant majorities.'[1] How well that assurance was justified by the result, all know—how far the grave of the murdered minister was apart

[1] Parl. Deb. xx. 758, 803; xxi. 1618, 1620; Ann. Reg. 1831, 27.

from the grave of the murdered monarch. The *denouement* of this tragedy, of which expediency was the prompter throughout, was exhibited in the front of that edifice which you are now repairing. Expediency destroyed the Church, expediency murdered the King." *

147. Division on the question, and violent resistance to the bill in the country.

On a division, leave was given to bring in the bill by a majority of 188 ; the numbers being 348 for the motion, and 160 against it. The country was surprised, but not intimidated, by this sudden and extraordinary conversion on a question on which the opinions of the legislature had been so divided that a majority of six against it had been succeeded by one of four in its favour. The Protestants, however, were not awanting to themselves in this crisis. From the moment that the determination of the Cabinet was announced, and still more from the time that the majority in the Lower House was known, petitions against the measure flowed in from all quarters with such vehemence as to astonish Ministers themselves, and leave no doubt as to the opinions of the country on the subject. Between the first division on the bill and the first reading, a period of only five days, 957 petitions were presented against the bill, and only 357 in its favour. In vain were the latter represented as the only index to enlightened opinion, and the former as the expression merely of antiquated bigotry and prejudice. The fact remained, that the people of England had loudly and decidedly spoken out on the occasion, and that it was evident to all the world that, if carried at all, it would not be in conformity with the wish of the majority of the nation, but by Government influence, in opposition to their loudly expressed and decided opinion. Great was the sensation excited by this state of things.[1] The public indignation was loudly expressed against what was deemed the treachery of some, the slavishness of others, the tergiversation of all, and a great and irremediable

[1] Ann. Reg. 1829, 35, 36; Parl. Deb. xx. 898, 1631.

* The two last eloquent paragraphs are taken *verbatim* from Mr Sadler's splendid speech.—*Parl. Deb.* xxi. 1618, 1620.

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shake given to the confidence of the people in the integrity of public men, which, as it had been in time past the palladium of the nation's fortune, so its loss presaged its future boundless calamities.

148. Speech of the Duke of Wellington in the Lords on the subject.

The bill was read a third time on March 30 with a majority of 178; the numbers being 320 to 142; and the same day it was carried by Mr Secretary Peel, accompanied by an unusually large attendance of members of the Commons, to the bar of the House of Lords. The debate which ensued in that House, though displaying all the ability by which its discussions have long been distinguished, presented little in addition to what had been urged for and against the measure in the House of Commons. But there were words fell from the Duke of Wellington, in the course of the debate, which deserve to be recorded, both as coming with peculiar grace from so illustrious a warrior, and as illustrating on a momentous occasion the love of peace, which formed so remarkable a feature in his character. "It has been my fortune," said he, "to have seen much of war—more than most men. I have been constantly engaged in the active duties of the military profession from boyhood until I have grown grey. My life has been passed in familiarity with scenes of death and human suffering. Circumstances have placed me in countries where the war was internal, between opposite parties in the same nation; and rather than a country I loved should be visited with the calamities which I have seen, with the unutterable horrors of civil war, I would run any risk, I would make any sacrifice, I would freely lay down my life. There is nothing which destroys property and prosperity, and demoralises character to the extent which civil war does. By it the hand of man is raised against his neighbour, against his brother, and against his father; the servant betrays his master, the master ruins his servant.[1] Yet this is the resource to which we must have looked, these are the means which

[1] Parl. Deb. xxi. 44, 46.

we must have applied, in order to have put an end to this state of things, if we had not embraced the option of bringing forward the measure, for which I hold myself responsible."

149. The bill is carried in the Peers, and by a large majority.

The bill was carried on the third reading in the House of Peers by a majority of 104; the numbers being 213 for it, and 109 against it. This was a much greater and more astounding change than the majority in the Commons, for the House of Lords had hitherto always thrown out the bills for Catholic emancipation by a majority of from 40 to 50; and as their lordships were fixed legislators, the alteration was much more remarkable than what had occurred in the changing representatives of the people. As such, it tended still farther to unsettle men's minds, and shake that trust in the integrity of statesmen which had hitherto been always felt, even in the worst times, in Great Britain, and been the main source of the national strength in all its difficulties. The people knew not where to turn, or whom to look to, when they were deserted in one House by the representatives whom they had sent to Parliament pledged to defend what they regarded as a sacred cause; and in the other by the hereditary legislators, whose fathers had stood by them in the good fight, and come off victorious.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1829, 96, 97; Parl. Deb. xxi. 694.

150. Great reluctance of the King to the bill.

But although the bill had thus passed both Houses by overwhelming majorities, and therefore might be regarded as, practically speaking, already the law of the land, yet no small difficulty remained behind; for the Sovereign was resolute against it, and he was supported by an overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of the whole empire: so that the extraordinary spectacle was exhibited, unprecedented in English history, of the King and people being decided on one side, and *both* Houses of Parliament on another. From the outset of the Irish agitation the monarch had become extremely uneasy on the affairs of that island, and most earnestly impressed upon his

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ministers the necessity of the most vigorous measures to repress it.* It was only by unremitting exertions, and representing the measure, on repeated occasions, to his Majesty, as one of absolute necessity, that the King's consent to bring in the bill had been obtained; and even when it was given, he repeatedly declared that "he only allowed them to go on, and pledged himself to nothing." He indulged to the very last in the hope that the bill would be rejected by the House of Peers, which would enable him, as his father had done with the India Bill in 1784, to dissolve the House of Commons, and appeal to the people on the subject. The passing of the bill by the Peers by so large a majority struck him with consternation, and revealed at once the helplessness to which the monarch of these mighty realms might be reduced when deprived of the support of his Parliament. In his agony he sent for Lord Eldon, to whom he declared "that the measures proposed gave him the greatest possible pain; that he was in the state of a person with a pistol presented to his breast; that he had nothing to fall back upon; that his ministers had twice threatened to resign if he did not allow the measure to be introduced; that he had been deserted by an aristocracy that had supported his father; that, instead of forty-five peers, as he had expected, against the measure, there were twice that number for it; that everything was revolutionary, that the Peers and aristocracy were giving way to it; that, if he did give his consent, he would go to Hanover, and return no more to England,—they may get a Catholic king in Sussex." Such was his despair that the un-

* "I cannot express to you adequately the extent of the difficulties which these and other occurrences in Ireland create in all discussions with his Majesty. He feels that in Ireland the public peace is every day violated with impunity by those whose duty it is to preserve it; that a formidable conspiracy exists; and that the supposed conspirators—those whose language and conduct point them out as the avowed principal agitators of the country—are admitted to the presence of his Majesty's representative in Ireland, and equally well received with the King's most loyal subjects."—Duke of WELLINGTON *to* Lord ANGLESEA, 11th Nov. 1828; *Ann. Reg.* 1829, pp. 96, 97.

happy monarch threw his arms round Lord Eldon's neck and wept, entreating him not to desert him, for he had no other to advise with. Lord Eldon, however, was too sensible a man not to see that when the King had, by his own admission, consented to a measure which had been fully explained to him, a ministry could not be found which would support him in rejecting it, and that, after the bill had passed both Houses by such large majorities in consequence of that consent, the King had no longer any choice in the matter. He advised his Majesty, therefore, to yield, which the latter agreed to with infinite reluctance, and the bill received the royal assent on April 13 *by commission:* the established mode of indicating it was the measure of the Ministry rather than the Sovereign.[1] *

[1] Eldon's Life, iii. 83, 86.

151. Bill for disfranchising the forty-shilling freeholders.

The passing of the Catholic Relief Bill was immediately followed by another which was understood by all parties to form part of the measure, and this was a bill for the disfranchisement of the forty-shilling freeholders in Ireland, and raising the county suffrage to ten pounds. As it was mainly by their exertions that the Relief Bill had been carried, a more flagrant instance of ingratitude never was exhibited, even in that wide field of selfishness and thanklessness which political affairs exhibit. It passed, however, with scarcely any opposition, through both Houses, and with *none* on the part of the Catholic

* The circumstances attending the King's original consent to bringing in the bill were thus stated by George IV. to Lord Eldon on this occasion: "In the former interview it had been represented by his Majesty that, after much conversation, twice with his Ministers, or such as had come down, he had said, 'Go on;' and upon the latter of those two occasions, after many hours' fatigue, and exhausted by the fatigue of conversation, he had said, 'Go on.' He now produced two papers, which he represented as copies of what he had written to them, in which *he assents to their proceeding and going on with the bill,* adding certainly in each, as he read them, very strong expressions of the pain and misery the proceeding cost him. It struck me at the time that, if I had been in office, I should have felt considerable difficulty about going on after reading these expressions; but whatever might be fair observation, as to giving or not effect to these expressions, I told his Majesty *it was impossible to maintain that his assent had not been expressed,* or to cure the evils which were consequential." —Twiss's *Life of Eldon,* vol. iii. p. 85.

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Association or the leaders of the agitation in Ireland. The Tories, in consistency with their principles, supported it as tending to lessen the strength of the priesthood, which had shown itself so formidable on the late crisis; the Whigs supported it, albeit an infringement on popular rights, as an essential part of a whole, the better part of which they were unwilling to lose. Mr Brougham said, "he consented to it as the price, the almost extravagant price, of the inestimable good which would result from the other measure." Sir James Mackintosh described it "as one of those tough morsels which he had scarcely been able to swallow." The bill passed both Houses almost unanimously—in the Commons only seventeen voted against it; in the Lords, after some divisions on matters of detail in the committee, it passed without a division. Scarcely a voice was raised in Ireland against the disfranchising of the very men by whose energy and perseverance the victory had been gained. As is too often the case with wounded veterans, they were allowed

"To beg their bread through realms their valour won."

Mr O'Connell even, who had declared himself ready to perish on the field or the scaffold in defence of the freeholders, whom he denominated his "faithful Forties," raised not a voice in their defence, and they were quietly consigned to the vault of all the Capulets.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1829, 98, 104; Parl. Deb. xxi. 590, 595.

152. Mr O'Connell's claim for a seat before the bill is rejected. May 15.

The passing of the Catholic Relief Bill was soon followed by a dramatic scene in the House of Commons, which savoured rather of the impetuosity of French feeling than the sober character of the British legislature. Mr O'Connell, who had pledged his reputation, which was very considerable, as a lawyer, that he could take his seat in the House of Commons without taking the oaths, proceeded now to redeem his pledge. Without, therefore, waiting for the period when he could be returned under the new act, he presented himself, on the 15th of

May, at the bar of the House of Commons, and offered to take, not the oaths required when he was elected, but the *new oaths* prescribed for Roman Catholics by the Relief Act recently passed. That act, however, contained a clause expressly declaring that it should apply only to members returned subsequently to the date of its being passed. This clause, evidently levelled at Mr O'Connell himself, and an unworthy blot on so liberal and indulgent a statute, was obviously a bar to his taking his seat under the new act; and on the construction of the old act, it was justly held by the House, by a majority of seventy-four, that he could not take his seat without taking the oaths required by the statutes in force when he was elected. This incident was chiefly remarkable for the temperance and moderation of the able legal argument he delivered on the occasion, which presented the strongest possible contrast to the vehement harangues he had been in the habit of delivering to his impassioned auditories in Ireland.[1]

[1] 1 Parl. Deb. xxi. 1378, 1389, 1402, 1458; Ann. Reg. 1829, 105, 115.

153. The second Clare election.

This incident, in itself trivial, became of importance from what followed, and the light which its consequences threw on the character of the great agitator, who for the next fifteen years occupied so prominent a place in the internal history of Ireland. Mr O'Connell's claim to a seat having been set aside, a new writ was issued for a fresh election for the county of Clare. He was chosen without opposition, for the strength of the agitators in the last election left no chance of success in any subsequent contest. But in his address to the freeholders, and his various speeches to the electors, he poured forth a flood of ribaldry and abuse, especially upon the Duke of Wellington and Mr Peel, by whom the Relief Bill had been passed, which demonstrated that he was as capable of appealing to the worst passions of the people as to the reason and justice of the British legislature. "The last election for Clare," he said, "is admitted to have been the immediate and irresistible cause of producing the Catholic Relief Bill. You have achieved the

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religious liberty of Ireland. Another such victory in Clare, and we shall attain the political freedom of our beloved country. That victory is still necessary to prevent Catholic rights and liberties from being sapped and undermined by the insidious policy of those men who, *false to their own party, can never be true to us*, and who have yielded, not to reason, but to necessity, in granting us freedom of conscience. A sober, moral, and religious people cannot continue slaves—they become too powerful for their oppressors—their moral strength exceeds their physical powers—and their progress towards prosperity is in vain *opposed by the Peels and Wellingtons of society.* These poor strugglers for ancient abuses yield to a necessity which violates no law and commits no crime; and having once already succeeded by these means, our next success is equally certain if we adopt the same virtuous and irresistible means." [1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1829, 123, 126.

154. His violent language and ingratitude.

Unbounded were the promises which he made to the electors if they returned him again to Parliament. He was to obtain a repeal of the Union, of the act disfranchising the forty-shilling electors, of the Vestry Bill, the Grand Jury Assessment Act; procure for every Catholic rector a parochial house and glebe, strain every nerve for parliamentary reform, and procure a poor-law for Ireland, which should embrace everything that was good, and exclude everything that was detrimental, in the English system. So violent was his language, so unmeasured his professions, that they lost him the support even of the Liberals in England, who heretofore had been most strenuous in his support. "The atrocity," says Miss Martineau, "of his language, in regard to all English statesmen, is scarcely credible now, even when the speeches themselves are before our eyes; and this incendiarism of course appears worse after his having shown how mild and temperate he could appear away from home, and among persons too enlightened to be animated by violent language. From this time the cry for the

repeal of the Union was Mr O'Connell's tool for cultivating the agitation, by which, in regard to mind, fame, and fortune, he lived. From this time he was dishonoured in the eyes of all upright men. From this time his glory was extinguished. He made men fear him, court him, groan under him, admire him, and, as far as regards the lower orders of the Irish, adore him; but from this moment no man respected him."[1] *

[1] Martineau, i. 503; Ann. Reg. 1829, 124, 125.

155. Character of Mr O'Connell.

DANIEL O'CONNELL, who mainly achieved this signal triumph for his religion and his country, and for the first time shook the power of the Protestant aristocracy of Great Britain which had brought about the Revolution that precipitated James II. from the throne, was a very remarkable man, and his character is the more worthy of study because it belongs properly to an earlier period of European history; and yet the success which he achieved proves that the qualities he possessed are calculated in every age to influence a large portion of mankind. He belonged to the age of Ignatius Loyola or St Francis rather than that of the French Revolution. Pope Hildebrand was not more devoted to the interests of the Holy See: Peter the Hermit did not possess in a higher

* Among other elegant effusions of the same description, Mr O'Connell said, on his entry into Ennis: "I promised you religious freedom, and I kept my word. The Catholics are now free, and the Brunswickers are no longer their masters; and a paltry set they were to be our masters. They would turn up the white of their eyes to heaven, and at the same time slyly put their hands into your pockets. They would discount God Almighty for the ready money. The Brunswick clubs of Dublin have sent down one, a miniature in flesh, poor Bumbo and his land calf-brother, to disfranchise the brave freeholders, and crooked-eye Fitzgerald swore to it; but I call on the gentry of Clare to separate themselves from the bloodhounds, and join what is intended for the good of the people. The question is no longer between Catholic and Protestant—that is at an end; it is now who is a good or a bad man. If you thus decide, which will you choose, Bumbo or me? I hope you will rub off *the foul stain of any connection with these bloodhounds*, and ratify the former election. What good did any member ever before in Parliament do for the county of Clare, except to get places for their nephews, cousins, &c.? What did I do? I procured for you emancipation. Does the Subletting Act oppress? I shall not be six months in Parliament until all your oppression shall be done away." There are many more in the same style.—See *Ann. Reg.*, 1829, pp. 126–129.

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degree the art of rousing and violently moving the great body of the people. His abilities were of a very high order—no man does such things without great powers—but they were not of a cast superior to his achievements. "Par negotiis non supra" was his true characteristic. He was born an agitator, and there he was supreme; but he was neither more nor less. He had remarkable talents, but no genius, and still less taste or refinement. To great powers of oratory he united a marvellous faculty for moving the multitude; but he was alike destitute of the chivalrous sentiments which win the hearts of the generous, or the ascendant of reason necessary to mould the opinions of the enlightened. He had none of the delicacy of feeling which renders it *impossible* for an elevated mind to say or do an unworthy thing. He was all things to all men. With equal facility he addressed the House of Commons in a powerful legal argument, and harangued the electors of Clare in strains of disgraceful ribaldry; with equal truth he, in the same breath, called the Irish the "finest peasantry upon earth," and heaped opprobrium upon the "stunted corporal" who had delivered Europe, and the "bigot Peel," who had endangered his own fame to strike off the fetters of religious intolerance in Ireland.

156. Explanations of his inconsistencies in the Catholic faith.

The secret of these strange contradictions is to be found in the ascendant of the faith to which he was through life sincerely and devotedly attached. His standard of rectitude was different from that to which men, apart from priestly influence, are accustomed. It was neither the honour which inspires the noble-hearted, nor the honesty which directs the simple and innocent. It was simply and exclusively the interests of the See of Rome. Everything was right, everything allowable, provided that was not forgotten. He transferred into the business of life and the contests of men the abominable maxim, which the selfishness of libertines has invented, that lovers' oaths are made only to be broken, and that to them

everything is permitted. To the value of truth, or the obligations to regard it, he was as insensible as Napoleon himself. He had all the duplicity and disregard of consistency which, with great vigour and frequent genius, distinguishes the Celtic character. Destitute of the self-respect which in general characterises the Saxon, he had all the insensibility to personal abasement which is so common among the humbler classes of his countrymen: so as he gained his object of acquiring a princely income, he cared not that his wealth was wrung from the scanty earnings of a destitute population. He was indifferent though what he said one day was in direct opposition to what he had previously asserted; he had no compunction in letting loose the vials of his wrath and the volubility of his abuse on the very men who had conferred upon himself and his faith the most inestimable benefits. He carried to perfection the art, so well understood in after times, of invariably and on every occasion inflaming the present passions of his hearers. Everything was done for present impression; and that impression was all directed to one end, the advancing the interests of the Church of Rome. To that he was at any time ready to sacrifice truth, consistency, and reputation; and in doing so, he not only was conscious of no wrong, but he was sustained by the belief of the highest merit, for he was giving to the Church not his body, but his soul. He was the most perfect embodiment that has appeared in recent times of the maxim, that "the end will justify the means;" and in his ultimate fate, and that of his measures, is to be found the most striking exemplification of what, even in this world, that maxim leads to.

157. His good qualities.

In justice to Mr O'Connell, it must be added that these great talents and dangerous qualities were united with others of a very different character. He was neither cruel nor avaricious: his great influence was always exerted as much to restrain the violence of his followers as to intimidate the resolution of his opponents.

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He had an instinctive horror at the shedding of blood, and aimed at achieving all his objects by pacific agitation alone. The art of doing so, without incurring the penalties of high treason or occasioning open rebellion, he carried to perfection. If he descended to unworthy means to sustain his fortunes, and sent the begging-box round to every beggar in Ireland to swell the "rent," he spent it as liberally in supporting the cause in which he was embarked, and maintaining his many needy or destitute followers: if he was "*alieni appetens*," he was "*sui profusus*." Immense sums passed through his hands, but he died poor. His ambition, and it was great, was not for himself: it was for the Roman Catholic Church and his distressed countrymen that he exerted his talents, and with their prosperity that he felt himself identified;—noble objects, if pursued by worthy means, but only the delusive light which leads to perdition if pursued by unworthy, and involving in a tortuous and dishonest policy. His faults were rather those of his faith and his position than himself. In appearance he was striking; he would have been remarked among a thousand. His countenance was neither handsome nor commanding, but it had something in it which irresistibly attracted the attention. Strong and square built, his figure conveyed the idea of great personal strength; quick, but evasive, his eye gave the impression of Jesuitical cunning. He scarce ever looked you in the face; a rare peculiarity, but which, when it exists, is eminently descriptive of character. In manners he was, when he chose, extremely pleasing; none could exhibit, when he desired it, more courtesy, or was a more agreeable companion; and none, when otherwise inclined, could let fly a more fearful volley of vulgar abuse.*

* The Author was once examined for eight hours before a Committee of the House of Commons (that on combinations, April 1838) by Mr O'Connell, who conducted the examination with equal acuteness and courtesy. Many of the features in the foregoing portrait were then drawn from nature.

158. Catholic emancipation a victory gained by the highly educated classes over the people.

Catholic emancipation, the first change on the Protestant constitution of the empire, and the first great triumph of the democratic over the aristocratic powers in the empire, was brought about, so far as Great Britain is concerned, in a very peculiar way. It was a victory gained by a large portion of the aristocratic, and the greater part of the highly educated classes, over the sincere conviction and honest resistance of the vast majority of the people. No one doubts that, if the Reform Bill had been the *first* measure carried, the Catholic Relief Bill would never have been the second. The present House of Commons (1854), even with the addition of the fifty Catholic members for Ireland, is greatly more hostile to the Catholics than that of 1829 was. The opposition to them is to be found now rather in the Lower than the Upper House. This is a very remarkable circumstance in a country so much influenced by public opinion as England, especially during the last half-century, has been. It was carried by the liberal opinions of the holders of a majority of the close boroughs, which brought the Government into such straits as compelled it to force through the measure. Catholic emancipation was the greatest, as it was THE LAST, triumph of the nomination system.

159. Aided by the contraction of the currency, and the power of the Catholic clergy.

It could not have been carried, however, if the divisions in the English aristocracy at that period had not been powerfully aided by two circumstances, which told with decisive effect at the same time on the social and political condition of Ireland. The first of these was the contraction of the currency, commenced in 1819, and rendered so fearfully stringent by the suppression of small notes by the bill of 1826. As these decisive measures lowered the price of agricultural produce nearly a half, and nearly the whole population of Ireland was either engaged in agriculture or directly dependent on it, the whole labouring classes of that country had been for the last ten years involved in difficulties and suffering. The

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only breathing-time they had known was during the extension of the currency in 1823, and the two next years, when, with the rise of prices, distress and disaffection had in a great measure disappeared, to be followed only by redoubled suffering after the bill of 1826 had again contracted it. These measures, by producing universal discontent, prepared the soil for the reception of the seed which the Catholic agitators were ready so plentifully to cast upon it. The second was, that the Romish clergy possessed such unbounded influence over their flocks that they were able to organise the whole Catholic population into a vast and disciplined array, alike docile to the voice of their chiefs, and inspired with the most violent hatred towards those whom they had been taught, and not without reason, to regard as their oppressors. It was owing to this combination of circumstances that England was so divided, and Ireland, so far as the Catholics went, so united, that emancipation had become, in a manner, a matter of state necessity before it was actually conceded by the Government.

160. Great difference between the results of emancipation and what was predicted by all parties.

Never, perhaps, was there a great public measure which was attended with results so entirely opposite to what was both prophesied and expected in both islands, as Catholic emancipation. The Liberals predicted an entire cessation of agitation and violence, the extinction of all causes of discord between the two islands, and the knitting together of the Saxon and Celtic population in the bonds of peace, tranquillity, and loyalty. The opponents of emancipation predicted from it a vast impulse to the Romish persuasion in Great Britain, the destruction of all the safeguards of Protestantism, and possibly the eventual restoration of the Catholic as the ruling faith of the whole empire. It is hard to say which set of predictions has been most completely falsified by the event. Ireland, so far from having been pacified, has been more agitated than ever since the great healing measure; the cry for the repeal of the Union has succeeded that for the

removal of the disabilities; monster meetings succeeded, and shook the island to its centre; the Whigs themselves were constrained, within five years of the passing of the Relief Bill, to pass a Coercion Act of surpassing severity; and at length matters came to such a pass that a famine of the thirteenth fell on the population of the nineteenth century, and the annual emigration of 250,000 persons at once thinned the redundant numbers, and removed the political dangers of the Emerald Isle. Catholicism, so far from receiving an impulse, has, from the same cause, met with the greatest check it has received in Great Britain since the Reformation: it has become rampant, and revealed its inherent ambition; and the consequence has been a vast revulsion of opinion in the middle and ruling classes of the empire against the tenets of the Vatican, and a determination to resist its encroachments unexampled since the Revolution. The Catholic faith has been embraced by several ladies of rank who sighed for an ecclesiastical opera, and many of fashion who desired the sway of confession, and by some inexperienced men of genius, who dreamt of the amiable illusion of unity of belief; but it has been sturdily resisted by the great body of the people. The grant to Maynooth, small as it is, with difficulty passes the House of Commons; and no one doubts that a reformed House of Commons would never have passed the Relief Bill.

161. Emancipation was a wise and great measure

Yet though the results have thus falsified the predictions, and been at variance with the expectations of all parties, an impartial consideration of the circumstances of the case leads to the conviction that emancipation was a wise and just measure, and such as, under the administration of a beneficent Providence, might be expected to be attended, even in this world, with its deserved reward. It was not for the reasons of policy and state necessity, which were so powerfully put forward by Mr Peel, strong and unanswerable as they undoubtedly were; it was advisable for a greater and more lasting reason—that it was

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in itself just and equitable. Opinion is not the fit ground either of exclusion, penalty, or punishment; it is acts only which are so. Differences of religious belief are imprinted on the mind so generally by the influence of parentage, habit, country, and circumstances, that they are for the most part as unavoidable as the colour of the hair or the stature of the body. The legislator is entitled to take cognisance of them only when they lead to external acts; and when they do so, let those acts be coerced or punished with vigour and justice. So great have been the evils which have arisen from persecution for differences of religious opinion, that they have gone far to neutralise the whole blessings of Christianity, and led some sceptical observers to hesitate whether it has brought most happiness or misery to mankind. It is the disgrace of Catholicism that it first began this atrocious system, and forced retaliation upon its opponents as a matter, at the time, of necessity. It is the glory of Protestantism that it first inscribed toleration on its banners, and practised it, like the Duke of York in answer to the decree of the Convention forbidding quarter, upon the most inveterate and unrelenting of its opponents.

162. Religious differences unavoidable, when religion is thought of at all.

Unity of belief is the dream of the inexperienced, the goal of the ambitious; dissent is the history of man. If, as is the case in many countries, one creed is embraced by a whole nation, it is a proof, not that all think alike on these subjects, but that none think at all. So naturally and universally does difference of opinion arise on every subject, and especially the most interesting which can occupy the human mind, that a more correct measure of the intellectual activity and general intelligence which pervades a people cannot be found than in the amount of religious division which prevails among them. The great object of a wise legislator should be to prevent the difference of thought from leading to conflicting *actions*; and the only way to do this, is to abolish all political differences founded on varieties of religious persuasion. No prophecy

of our Saviour was ever more completely accomplished than the memorable one, that he came to bring, not peace on earth, but a sword. The reason is to be found in the varieties of the human mind; the different lights in which the same truths present themselves to different intellects; the difference in the moving powers by which different nations or individuals are influenced. Could one creed ever be embraced by the impassioned Italian, who seeks in religion a gratification of his passion for art, and his susceptibility of emotion; the obsequious Russian, who accepts as the commands of Heaven the words of the Czar; and the sturdy Scot, to whom polemical disputes are the very salt and zest of life? Therefore it is that the Gospel is so silent on the matters of church government and form, and directs the whole weight of its authority to combat the selfish principles, the root of all evil in the whole of mankind. The difference lies, not in the truths delivered, but the people taught. Truth, indeed, is ever the same, but so also is the light of the sun; yet in what different aspects do his rays present themselves to the various situations of man — on the sunny hill and in the level plain, on the watery waste and in the burning desert, when piercing the murky clouds of the city and when illuminating the mountain turf, when striking on the summits of the Alps and feebly struggling through the mists of the valley!

163. Unworthy spirit in which emancipation was received by the Roman Catholics.

But although emancipation was thus decisively recommended by the highest considerations of justice and expedience, yet there can be no doubt that the granting of it was a very great effort of political virtue on the part of England, and that the concession was against the wishes and adverse to the sincere and disinterested, and therefore respectable, opinions of the great majority of the inhabitants of the empire. As such, it should have been received in a grateful and worthy spirit by the Catholics of Ireland, who beheld a great act of justice done against the inclinations of a majority of their fellow-subjects, and

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at a time when no corresponding steps towards liberality had been taken by the governments still adhering to the See of Rome. It was just the reverse: the act of justice was received in the most ungrateful, and even revengeful spirit. So far from being pacified, Ireland was only the more distracted by the great healing measure. The admission of the Catholics to Parliament became the platform on which additional attacks were directed against Protestantism, and even the political institutions of the empire. "The Orangemen," says Miss Martineau, "became more furious and bigoted through fear and jealousy of their triumphant neighbours, and those triumphant neighbours were urged on by their leaders to insufferable insolence towards the Government and sister nations which had granted them relief no longer possible to be withheld. The list of Irish outrages, the pictures of Irish crime which follow in the registers of the time, the record of Catholic emancipation, are very painful; but they show, not that there was anything wrong in the procedure of relief, but that it had been too long delayed."[1]

[1] Martineau, i. 504.

164. How it was that Catholic emancipation failed.

But although nothing can excuse or even palliate the ingratitude and oblivion of promises which, from the moment when Catholic emancipation was passed, characterised the conduct of the Irish agitators; yet it was neither wholly nor chiefly owing to that cause, and still less to its being so long delayed, that the measure so totally failed in producing the expected results. It failed because it did not alleviate in the slightest degree, but, on the contrary, fearfully aggravated, the real causes of evil in the country. These were the indolent, improvident, and yet reckless character of the peasantry, the extravagance and embarrassment of the landholders, the division of the land among a million of starving cultivators, the habit of incessant and overwhelming increase encouraged by the priests, the absence of manufactories to absorb the redundant numbers, and the total unfitness of the people

for self-government or direction. These evils could not in any degree be alleviated by the admission of forty or fifty zealous Catholics into Parliament, some of them gifted with considerable natural talents, but for the most part destitute of property, without a cultivated education or business habits, and entirely devoted, one and all, to the interests of the See of Rome. On the contrary, they were most seriously aggravated by the introduction of a body of men of this description into the legislature; because agitation, the bane of the country, was increased by the knowledge that so powerful a phalanx was always ready to support it in Parliament; and the phalanx itself, being entirely directed by foreign ecclesiastical influence, pursued on every occasion measures calculated to embarrass the English government and weaken the English aristocracy, without any regard to their effect in augmenting the difficulties and increasing the sufferings of their own constituents.

165. Its beneficial effects on the English government.

If, however, Catholic emancipation has failed in realising any of the benefits predicted from it in the sister isle, it has removed one great stumbling-block in the way of good government in Great Britain. The difficulty which Mr Peel so strongly felt and so feelingly deplored, arising from the divided state of the Cabinet on this vital question, has disappeared. Subsequent times have seen weak governments and embarrassed cabinets in abundance, but never to such an extent on Irish affairs. On them unanimity has almost constantly pervaded both the Government and the Legislature. The ingratitude with which the gift was received, the increased agitation which followed it, the turmoil in which the country was constantly kept by the efforts of the agitators, and the ready acquiescence of the people in their measures, have united all classes in Great Britain against them. The cry for the repeal of the Union was met in a very different spirit from that for Catholic emancipation. Such is the effect and the reward of just measures; they detach the

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generous and noble-hearted from the side by whom they have been abused, and unite them in support of that by which the injustice has been removed.

166. Emancipation would have equally failed if granted earlier, or if it had been more complete.

It is commonly said by the Liberals in England, that emancipation has failed because it was conceded too late; by the Catholics in Ireland, because it was incomplete, and did not give that entire ascendancy to their church to which, in Ireland at least, it was entitled. Both opinions appear to be erroneous. Keeping in view what were the real causes of Irish suffering, and which had prepared the soil everywhere so plentifully for the seed of the agitators, it is impossible to maintain that they would have been removed, or in the slightest degree mitigated, by either or both of those much-vaunted measures. Suppose emancipation had been conceded in 1801, when Mr Pitt left office on the subject, and fifty Irish Catholics had ever since sat in Parliament; suppose that the Church property had been wholly transferred to the Romish Church, and high mass celebrated in every cathedral of Ireland ever since that time, would these changes have either alleviated the suffering or eradicated the seeds of evil in that unhappy country? Unquestionably they would not. Still would a million of squalid cultivators have vegetated in listless indolence on the soil, and overspread the land with their descendants; still would self-government have proved the bane of a people incapable of self-direction; still would the concession of English privileges to a nation unfitted for their reception have left the door perpetually open to withering and ruinous agitation. The vantage-ground gained in Ireland would have proved the greatest of all incitements to the See of Rome to press upon its adversaries, until they had regained the inestimable jewel of Great Britain for the tiara of the Roman Pontiff; and what could have been expected from that but increased exasperation, and, still more ulcerated feelings, between the two countries? Emancipation has not failed because it came either too late or was incomplete, but

because the real evils of Ireland arose from an entirely different set of causes, which that measure had no tendency to diminish, but rather to increase,

But still emancipation was a wise measure, because it was a just one. "Fiat justitia ruat cœlum," was the noblest maxim of antiquity; "Fais ce que tu dois, avienne ce que pourra," the expression of the chivalrous feelings of modern Europe. England at the eleventh hour did the just act, but she did it, not from the influence of equitable or tolerant feelings, but in obedience to the fierce demands of the agitators, and to avert the dreaded evils of civil war. She has been punished, and justly punished, for doing a right thing from wrong motives, and the consequences of the fault have already been amply experienced. The great precedent of yielding, not to justice, but to coercion, has not been lost upon the agitators within her own bosom. The Reform movement was the child of the Catholic agitation; the Anti-Corn-Law League of the triumph of Reform. The helm has passed out of the hands that used to hold it; the vessel, when a storm arises, has ceased to obey the helm, and drifts before the wind. It has been discovered, that if a question can be brought forward, touching the interests and inflaming the passions of a numerical majority of the people, the Government can be constrained, and measures forced upon it at variance with its best interests, most settled convictions, and fixed determination. This penalty has England incurred for yielding, not to justice, but intimidation. But this punishment is as nothing to what Ireland has experienced, or the Romish agitators have incurred; nor is there to be found in the whole history of human affairs a more memorable instance of righteous retribution than has overtaken them, in the unforeseen but now apparent and natural consequence of their transgressions.

167. Emancipation has brought a righteous retribution to both parties.

That Catholic emancipation was the parent of the Reform Bill is now universally acknowledged, and will

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168. First effect of emancipation in inducing reform.

be abundantly proved in the very next chapter. It added fifty votes to the movement party in Ireland, and took as many, by the heartburning which it excited in this island, from the Conservative majority in Great Britain. This change, one hundred in all, and two hundred on a division, entirely altered the balance of parties in the Imperial Parliament. For the first time since Mr Pitt's defeat of the Coalition in 1784, it gave a majority in the House of Commons to the liberal and movement party, and, with the impulse given to their opinions by the French Revolution, first overturned the Duke of Wellington's administration, and then carried through the Reform Bill. Immense was the triumph of the united Catholics and Liberals at this great victory, which in its first results gave them a majority of five to one in the House of Commons, and seemed to have prostrated the House of Lords beneath their feet. Yet in the consequences of this very triumph, and the measures pursued amidst shouts of victory by the conquerors, were preparing the greatest of all rewards to the vanquished, and a natural but deserved retribution for their ingratitude to the victors. The Catholic religion has not, since the Reformation, experienced such a blow as it has done in both hemispheres from the consequences of Catholic emancipation and the measures of its supporters. To be convinced of this, we have only to consider what is the social situation of Ireland, what measures its material interests require, and which the majority of its representatives have concurred in introducing.

169. Effects of reform in inducing Free Trade.

As Ireland is almost entirely an agricultural country, and nineteen-twentieths of its inhabitants are maintained by, and its wealth derived from, the cultivation of the soil, it is evident that what *its* interests required was such a protective policy as might secure for its cultivators the monopoly in some degree of the English market. There was much to be said in favour of free trade in grain so far as the manufacturers of Manchester, Glasgow, and

Birmingham were concerned, whose interest was to buy grain cheap; but nothing at all in so far as the agriculturists of Ireland were concerned, whose interest was to sell it dear. If, therefore, the members, whether for counties or boroughs of Ireland, had been directed by the interests of their constituents, they would have done everything in their power to secure the English market for them, by supporting the protective system of Great Britain. But being under a foreign influence, and directed by the Court of Rome, whose policy was to embarrass and weaken the English aristocracy, which it regarded as its most formidable enemy, they did just the reverse. They coalesced with the liberal and movement party in England, and supported all the measures tending to lessen the cost of agricultural produce in the United Kingdom. At the same time they put themselves at the head of the repeal agitation in Ireland, and shook the country to its centre by the monster meetings, which occupied every thought and engaged every arm in the Catholic population of Ireland. The result is well known. Agriculture, neglected for political agitation, fell into decay; a famine of the thirteenth fell upon the population of the nineteenth century; free trade in grain was introduced as a remedy for insupportable evils; and Ireland, which hitherto had enjoyed the monopoly, was exposed to the competition of the world in the supply of the English market.

170. Effects of these changes on the population and Catholics of Ireland.

Immense beyond all precedent have been the consequences of these changes, but upon none have they fallen with such force and severity as upon the agitators and Catholics of Ireland. From a statistical paper recently published by the Census Commissioners of Dublin, it appears that the population of the island, which in 1846—the year of the famine, and when Free Trade was introduced—had been 8,386,940, had sunk in 1851 to 6,551,970; and as the emigration from the island has been about 250,000 a-year, it cannot now (1854) exceed

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6,000,000.* At least two millions and a half of persons have disappeared from Ireland during ten years, and of these *above two millions are Roman Catholics.* The consequence is, that the disproportion between the Protestants and Catholics has disappeared; already it is doubtful whether they are not equal in number; at the next census they certainly will be so. The priests in the country have already sunk to one-half their former number—they have declined from nearly 5000 to 2600. At the same time the embarrassments of the landed proprietors, arising from the depression of agriculture, consequent upon Free Trade and the fall in the value of rural produce, have come to such a climax that a rigorous measure became indispensable. The land was in great part wrested from the old insolvent proprietors, and the sales of the Encumbered Estates Commission have transferred it to Saxon wealth nearly as generally as the

* A return has been issued from the Census Office in Dublin, showing the population of Ireland from the year 1805 to 1851, both inclusive, as far as the same could be ascertained from various sources. The result is thus set forth:—

| Year. | Population. | Year. | Population. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1805, | 5,395,456 | 1829, | 7,563,898 |
| 1806, | 5,460,447 | 1830, | 7,664,974 |
| 1807, | 5,526,224 | 1831, | 7,767,401 |
| 1808, | 5,592,792 | 1832, | 7,807,241 |
| 1809, | 5,660,162 | 1833, | 7,847,285 |
| 1810, | 5,728,343 | 1834, | 7,887,534 |
| 1811, | 5,797,347 | 1835, | 7,927,989 |
| 1812, | 5,867,181 | 1836, | 7,968,655 |
| 1813, | 5,937,856 | 1837, | 8,009,527 |
| 1814, | 6,039,544 | 1838, | 8,050,609 |
| 1815, | 6,142,972 | 1839, | 8,091,902 |
| 1816, | 6,248,174 | 1840, | 8,133,408 |
| 1817, | 6,355,177 | 1841, | 8,175,124 |
| 1818, | 6,464,013 | 1842, | 8,217,055 |
| 1819, | 6,574,712 | 1843, | 8,259,200 |
| 1820, | 6,687,306 | 1844, | 8,301,563 |
| 1821, | 6,801,827 | 1845, | 8,344,142 |
| 1822, | 6,892,719 | 1846, | 8,386,940 |
| 1823, | 6,984,826 | 1847, | — |
| 1824, | 7,078,164 | 1848, | — |
| 1825, | 7,172,748 | 1849, | — |
| 1826, | 7,268,598 | 1850, | — |
| 1827, | 7,365,729 | 1851, | 6,551,970 |
| 1828, | 7,464,156 | | |

—*Census Rep.*, Aug. 6, 1854—Dublin.

Celtic exodus has consigned its cultivation to the direction of Saxon hands.

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171. Beneficial effect of these changes on the United Empire.

These changes, which have come on so suddenly that we are scarcely able even now to appreciate their full effects, have already produced a visible and most salutary change on the condition of the whole empire. Ireland has ceased to be, what for about a century past it had been, a thorn in the side of England, a source of weakness instead of strength to the United Kingdom. It is no longer necessary to retain thirty thousand soldiers in the country to keep down its inhabitants. The barracks are empty, or tenanted only by the police—monster meetings are unknown—the undiminished strength of the empire can be sent to the Baltic or the Euxine. Agitation has disappeared—the repeal of the Union is no longer heard of—all thoughts and desires are turned to the promised land on the other side of the Atlantic. England was punished, and justly punished, for her religious intolerance and political selfishness by a century of vexation and weakness, consequent on the connection with Ireland—she is now reaping the reward of a more generous policy, and a great act of justice, in the comparative comfort of that connection, and the dawn of prosperity visible in the sister isle. But it is not to the gratitude or loyalty of those to whom this act of justice was done that she is indebted for this blessed consummation; she owes it to their ingratitude and blind submission to a foreign potentate, which, by depriving the Catholics of the remuneration for their industry, has driven them headlong across the Atlantic. That which all the wisdom of man had failed to effect has resulted from the unforeseen and not intended consequences of his passions. Thus does the wisdom of the Almighty cause even the wrath of man to praise Him.

Nor have the consequences of emancipation been less decisive against the spread of the Catholic faith in Great

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172. Reaction against Catholicism in Great Britain.

Britain. It was natural that the Romish hierarchy, seeing this great victory gained by the effects of agitation in Ireland, and many persons of distinction of both sexes in England embracing their faith, should have thought that the time had come when the work of the Reformation was to be undone, and the British Isles were to be wholly regained by the Holy See. They openly announced the project accordingly. Great Britain was divided into ecclesiastical districts; bishops were appointed, and the cardinal-legate assumed the long-forgotten title of Catholic times. The effect was decisive. A burst of Protestant enthusiasm ensued unparalleled since the Reformation, and the prime-minister of the Crown, a leading supporter of emancipation, took the initiative in calling it forth. The aggressive and ambitious spirit of the Church of Rome—which is recorded in every page of modern history, but had come to be forgotten during the tolerant slumber of the close of the nineteenth century—was again brought to light, and the contest of the Protestants with the Catholics was renewed, but without the withering alliance with political distinction which had so long detached the generous from the side of the former. Men saw that the Church of Rome was unchanged and unchangeable, and must be combated with vigour as in the first fervour of the Reformation; but the contest came to be carried on, not by pains, penalties, and disabilities, but by reason, argument, and intelligence, and above all, by raising the intellectual character of women, among whom its principal votaries are always to be found. The whole vantage-ground gained by the Catholics during the struggle for emancipation was lost by its acquisition.

173. And in America.

Nor have the consequences of that concession been less injurious to the cause of Catholicism on the other side of the Atlantic. The pastors in vain followed their flocks to the New World; their ascendant was at an end when they left the shores of the Emerald Isle. Vast was

the difference between the dark night of Celtic ignorance, lighted only by the feeble rays of superstition, and the bright aurora of Transatlantic energy, illuminated by the effulgence of knowledge, intelligence, and intellect. The priest was swallowed up in the gulf of democracy. The ascendant which the Romish clergy had acquired amidst the ignorance and solitude of the Irish wilds, was speedily lost when surrounded by the turmoil of American interests, the conflict of American sects. So signally has the influence of the Church of Rome declined in the United States, that, notwithstanding the immense influx of Irish Catholics in the last ten years, there are only now 1,200,000 members of Romish churches in the Union, out of 13,000,000 embraced in the whole divisions of the Christian communion. It is a common complaint, accordingly, of the Catholic clergy in America, that they have lost all influence over their flocks; that their followers live altogether without God in the world; and that, without embracing any new faith, they have simply renounced the old. This, it is to be feared, is too often the case. From superstition to infidelity is but a step. It is by the torch of knowledge, and it alone, that the flame of a pure and lasting piety is, in an enlightened age, to be kindled. But that torch is not awanting in America; and, without anticipating the march of events that yet lie buried in the womb of time, it may with confidence be predicted that, however strongly the Catholic tenets may be rooted amidst the traditions and corruptions of the Old World, it will never make head against the energy and intelligence of the New; and that still less will infidelity permanently retain any hold of a people open to the influences and blessed by the choicest gifts of Nature.

# CHAPTER XXII.

## DOMESTIC HISTORY OF ENGLAND FROM THE PASSING OF THE CATHOLIC RELIEF BILL IN 1829 TO THE FALL OF THE WELLINGTON ADMINISTRATION IN 1830.

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THE English nation can never have more than one object of interest or ambition at one time; and thence it is that internal discord has so often been appeased by the advent of foreign war. Accordingly, the three years which elapsed between the passing of the Catholic Relief Bill in 1829, and the Reform Bill in 1832, presented but one feature—the preparation for or approach of reform. As the Hundred Days were nothing but the eve before the battle of Waterloo, so these three years were nothing but the eve before the Reform Revolution. All interests were wound up in it, all desires centred in it, all heads occupied with it. The indifference which had so long prevailed on this subject had passed away, and been succeeded by an intense passion, which gradually went on accumulating in violence, until at length it became altogether irresistible. Various causes conspired at that time to feed and strengthen this passion which had never before come into operation, and by their combined action brought about the great and all-important, though happily bloodless, revolution of 1832.

1. The interval between emancipation and the passing of the Reform Bill was entirely occupied by the question of reform.

1. The first of these was the immense increase of manufacturing and commercial wealth and industry which had taken place during and since the war, and the great

number of considerable places, abounding in riches and teeming with energy, which were wholly unrepresented in Parliament. If it is true that knowledge is power, still more is it true that wealth is power; and in the great commercial cities of Britain both these were combined, without the constitution giving their inhabitants any channel by which they might make their influence felt by the Government. This was a serious defect, and was felt as a very great grievance. In early times it had been obviated by the practice which prevailed of sending writs to each borough or village which had become considerable, commanding them to send burgesses to Parliament. But this practice, which was entirely in harmony with the spirit of the constitution, had long fallen into desuetude, since it had been discovered that a majority in the House of Commons gave the party possessing it the command of the State; and now the great towns, many of which had quadrupled in population and wealth during the preceding quarter of a century, remained without representation; while vast numbers of little boroughs, which had declined with the changes of time to a mere fraction of their former inhabitants, still sent members to Parliament, many of them at the dictation, or in pursuance of the sale, of a neighbouring magnate. So far had this gone, that it was the constant asseveration of the movement party that a majority of the House of Commons was returned by two hundred and fifty individuals, most of them members of the Upper House, who had thus come to engross in their own persons the whole power of the State, by having got the command of both Houses of Parliament.

2. Great want of representation for the commercial towns.

2. This system, which had come to be styled the *indirect representation*, had worked well, and given rise to no serious complaints, as long as the interests of those who got into the boroughs, either by purchase or the favour of the proprietors, were identical with those in the unrepresented great towns. As long as men see their interests

3. The interests of the boroughs now at variance with those of the country.

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attended to, and their wishes consulted by those intrusted with the administration of affairs, they are contented, even though they have had no hand in their selection. It is when a divergence between the two begins that discontent commences, and the cry for a change of institutions is heard. This divergence was first felt after the termination of the war. During its continuance, as prices of the produce of all kinds of industry were continually rising, the interests of the landlords, the capitalists, and the commercial men were the same—all were *making money;* and therefore all alike were interested in the support of the protective system; by which the prices of all the productions of industry were kept up, and the process of accumulation favoured. But when the war ceased, and prices rapidly fell, the interests of the different classes of society, so far from being identical, came into collision. To sell dear was the interest of the producers and those who rested on their industry; to buy cheap was the interest of those holding realised wealth, and the whole class of urban consumers. Thence a clear and decided breach between them, and the commencement of discontent and complaint against the proprietors of the close boroughs, and the members whom they sent to Parliament; for the measures which they pursued, suggested by their opulent constituents, were often not only noways conducive to those of the unrepresented towns, but directly at variance with them.

4. Effects of the contraction of the currency on the desire for reform.

3. This divergence appeared in the most striking manner, and became irreparable, upon the passing of the monetary bill of 1819, and the commencement of the system of free trade and a restricted currency. As this great change rendered the fall of prices permanent, and ere long caused it to amount to 50 per cent on every species of produce, it placed the interests of the consumers and of the holders of realised wealth irrevocably at variance. The former were interested in measures tend-

ing to lower prices, because it augmented the value, and in effect increased the amount of their fixed incomes; the latter were dependent on the rise of prices, because it diminished the weight of their debts and obligations, and increased the remuneration for their industry. It was impossible to reconcile these opposite interests: the amiable dream of the interests of all classes being the same vanished before this stern reality of their being at variance. The inhabitants of the great unrepresented boroughs were not aware to what their distresses were owing: they ascribed it, at the dictation of their political leaders, to the weight of taxation, the extravagance of Government, or the like; but they all felt the pressure, and discontent was general, because suffering among the industrial classes was universal. The demand for reform, which was regularly hushed over the whole empire when suffering, from an extension of the currency, had disappeared, was revived with increased intensity when, by any of the measures which have been mentioned, the currency was rendered scanty. So invariable is this sequence, that it obviously stands in the relation of cause and effect.* "In times of distress or disaster," says Mr Roebuck, "reform excited much attention; but when prosperity and success returned, it seemed to have passed almost out of remembrance. The matter, however, was never entirely forgotten; for although pressing public exigencies might induce the people occasionally to postpone their desires, although great prosperity led to a temporary forgetfulness,[1] the cry for reform always returned with the

[1] Roebuck, History of the Whig Ministry, i. 187.

* Petitions to Parliament in favour of Reform.

| | | Currency. | | | Currency. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1820, | 0 | £34,145,385 | 1826, | 0 | £33,611,141 |
| 1821, | 19 | 30,727,630 | 1827, | 0 | 31,493,250 |
| 1822, | 12 | 25,658,600 | 1828, | 0 | 28,394,497 |
| 1823, | 29 | 27,396,544 | 1829, | 0 | 28,501,456 |
| 1824, | 0 | 32,761,152 | 1830, | 14 | 26,965,090 |
| 1825, | 0 | 41,049,298 | | | |

—*Quarterly Review*, No. xc., July 1831; and Tooke *On Prices*, ii. 381, 383.

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reappearance of distress; and to the faulty constitution of the House of Commons liberal politicians were ever prone to ascribe nearly all the national misfortunes."

5. Effect of Catholic agitation and its success in stimulating reform.

4. In this state of affairs the Catholic agitation began, and the great and dangerous example was presented to the world of a vast political change being forced on the Government against its will, by the efforts of a well-drilled and numerous party in the State. Ministers had, with more sincerity than wisdom, admitted that they had yielded to external pressure; the Duke of Wellington had declared, amidst the cheers of the House of Peers, in words more graceful in a veteran conqueror than judicious in a young statesman, that the point was yielded to avoid the terrible alternative of civil war. This important acknowledgment was not lost upon the friends of parliamentary reform. If agitation, kept within legal bounds, and steering clear of the penalties of high treason, had succeeded so well in Ireland, why might it not be attended with similar results in Great Britain, the more especially as the voice of the great numerical majority, particularly in the large towns, which was sure to be loudest and most attended to in the matter, was sure to be raised in its support? It was resolved accordingly by the liberal leaders to make this the next *cheval de bataille* with the Government; and although it was well known that most of the Whig aristocracy who influenced so many of the close boroughs would be reluctant to part with what they regarded as their birthright, yet it was anticipated, not without reason, that they would be overpowered by the loud voice of the people, and be constrained, in the last resort, to listen to their demands rather than lose their support.

5. In this expectation they were not disappointed, and very much owing to a defection in the ranks of their adversaries, which had never before been experienced, but was the natural result of the measures which had recently been adopted. Not only was the Tory party

divided in consequence of the forcing of the Relief Bill on the nation, but a considerable part among them, estimable alike by their courage, their sincerity, and their character, had been driven for the time into the ranks of their opponents. Their incomes had been halved by the contraction of the currency and the adoption of free trade, while their debts and obligations remained the same: their petitions for inquiry and relief, again and again presented, and supported by a fearful array of facts, had been disregarded or derided; and almost every successive session had been marked by legislative measures which went to diminish their own fortunes and augment those of the urban capitalists, who had become their opponents. Capital, intrenched in the close boroughs which it had acquired by purchase or influence, disregarded the complaints of rural industry, as an enemy in possession of an array of strong fortresses despises the partial insurrection or general suffering of the inhabitants of the fields. Accordingly, discontent at existing institutions and the desire for change had become of late years more general among the farmers and landholders than even the inhabitants of towns; and the question was often put in the form of the algebraic problem: "Given the Toryism of a landed proprietor; required to find the period of want of rents which will reduce him to a Radical reformer."

6. Division among the Tories from the effect of the contraction of the currency.

6. When the minds of the industrious classes, especially in the country, were in this state of discontent, owing to the constant difficulties in which they were kept by the fall in the price of every species of produce, and the vexatious contrast which their situation presented to that of the monied classes, who were every day growing richer from the same cause, Catholic emancipation blew it into a perfect flame, and created that schism among the upholders of the constitution which gave it every prospect of success. Injured in their fortunes and circumstances by the measures which had been pursued, they

7. Catholic emancipation powerfully aided the desire for reform.

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now found themselves wounded in their affections. The strongest convictions of their understandings, the deepest feelings of their hearts, had been set at nought or lacerated by a great measure forced upon the nation, in opposition alike to the wishes of the Sovereign and the loudly expressed sentiments of a decided majority of the people, by ministerial influence and the votes of the representatives of the close boroughs. Immense was the impression which the perception of this occasioned. It was admitted by the advocates of emancipation, that, if the popular voice had determined the question, it would never have been carried; and yet it had become the law of the land. Before this stern reality the illusion of the people's voice being all-powerful in England had melted away. The wrath of the leaders of the old Tories and the High Church party exhaled in Parliament on many different occasions. So vehement did the excitement become that the Duke of Wellington challenged Lord Winchelsea for words spoken in the House of Peers, and a duel ensued, happily without any serious results on either side.* A motion was made for parliamentary reform soon after the Relief Bill passed, which was negatived by a majority of 74 in a House of 184; but the names in the minority revealed the great transposition of parties which had taken place.[1] In the course of it, Mr William Smith, the member for Norwich, said, "One effect, he was happy to

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[1] Parl. Deb. xxi. 1638; Ann. Reg. 1829; Chron. 58.

* This duel deserves to be noticed as the *last* between any men of mark in Great Britain before this barbarous practice went into desuetude. The cause of offence was, that, in a letter published in the newspapers to the secretary of the Association for establishing King's College, London, Lord Winchelsea said: "Late political events have convinced me that the whole transaction (regarding the College) was intended as a blind to the Protestant and High Church party, that the noble Duke, who had for some time previous to that determined upon breaking in upon the constitution of 1688, might the more effectually, under the cloak of some outward show of zeal for the Protestant religion, carry on his insidious designs for the infringement of our liberties, and the introduction of Popery into every department of the State." The Duke, upon seeing this, wrote to Lord Winchelsea: "No man has a right, whether in public or private, by speech, or in writing, or in print, to *insult* another, by attributing to him motives for his conduct, public or private, which disgrace

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find, had been produced by the Catholic Relief Bill, which its best friends had not anticipated: it had transformed a number of the highest Tories in the land into something very nearly resembling Radical reformers."

A circumstance occurred at this time which most materially tended to swell the cry for reform in Parliament, by increasing the difficulties under which, from the effect of legislative measures, the industrious classes laboured. By the act passed in February 1826, regarding small notes, it had been provided that, though no new stamps were to be issued for small notes after its date, the notes already in circulation were to continue to circulate, and be received as a legal tender for three years longer. These three years expired in March 1829; and all notes in England below £5 immediately disappeared from the circulation. Great was the effect of this decisive change upon the fortunes and well-being of the industrious classes, both in town and country, over the whole nation. Coinciding, by a singular chance in point of time, with the sudden conversion of so many statesmen and legislators, in both Houses, on the subject of the Catholic claims, and the passing of the Relief Bill in consequence, it powerfully tended to inflame the desire for radical change, by superadding personal and private distress generally in the industrious classes to indignation at public measures, distrust in public men. The diminution in the circulation

8. Great effect of the entire suppression of small notes in March 1829.

or criminate him. If a gentleman commits such an act indiscreetly, in the heat of debate, or in a moment of party violence, he is always ready to make reparation to the party whom he may have thus injured. I am convinced that your Lordship will, upon reflection, be anxious to reclaim yourself from the pain of having thus insulted a man who never injured or offended you." Lord Winchelsea refused to make what was deemed by the Duke a satisfactory explanation: the parties met, and Lord Winchelsea fired in the air, after March 21. receiving the Duke's fire, which carried off a curl of his hair. The Earl, having done so, made a very handsome apology for words which were certainly unwarrantable in the circumstances, because they imputed motives not apparent on the face of the transaction. The Duke rode to the place of meeting at Chalk Farm, attended only by Sir Henry Hardinge as his second, and a single servant. —See *Ann. Reg.* 1829, pp. 58, 62.

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in consequence was immediate and decisive: but this effect, great as it was, was the least part of the evil.* It was the *contraction of credit* consequent on the diminution which was the real evil, and that in a commercial country soon induced universal distress. It is one thing for bankers to issue small notes to customers of their own, striking off which from being the general medium of circulation, they are sure will not come back upon them for a very long period, if at all: it is another and a very different thing to issue sovereigns or large notes, whether of their own or the Bank of England, which can only be purchased for full value.

9. Motion on the distress of the silk-weavers.

The silk-weavers were the first who brought their sufferings before the legislature, under the new state of monetary matters. It appeared from the statements made by the petitioners, that, since the change in the law regarding the importation of foreign silks, there had been a progressive and most alarming diminution in the importation of the raw material, and increase in the importation of the foreign manufactured, insomuch that "there had already been lost to the industry of this country no less than £1,000,000 yearly. Hence our silk-mills and looms were standing still, the weavers were starving, and it was quite certain that many even of the masters were giving up the trade, and becoming mere importers." † The allegations of the petitioners were so notoriously well founded, and so entirely supported by the parliamentary

| Years. | Currency. | Years. | Currency. |
|---|---|---|---|
| * 1827, . . | £31,493,250 | 1829 . . . | 28,501,450 |
| 1828 . . | 28,394,487 | 1830, . . . | 26,965,090 |

—TOOKE *On Prices*, ii. 381, 383.

| IMPORTS OF WROUGHT SILK. | | IMPORTS OF RAW SILK. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Years. | Value. | Years. | Average—lb. |
| † 1826, . . . | £445,000 | 1821-2-3, . . | 2,691,000 |
| 1827, . . . | 555,087 | 1826-7-8, . . | 1,642,000 |
| 1828, . . . | 676,973 | | |

In 1824-5 there were 17,000 looms employed in Spitalfields; in 1829 there were 9000. The rate of wages in the former period was 17s. a-week, in the latter 9s. Weavers in the former period got 8s., in the latter 5s.—*Parl. Deb.*, vol. xxi., pp. 751, 754. *Ann. Reg.* 1829, 116, 117.

returns on the subject, that Ministers did not attempt to deny the facts asserted, but only alleged that the distress was owing, not to Free Trade, but to over-production; that it was as great in France as in England; and that matters would be still worse if the system of protection were restored. They took, however, the only proper course which could be adopted under the circumstances, and in conformity with the principles of Free Trade; and that was, to make a considerable reduction in the duties on the importation of the raw material. The duties, accordingly, were lowered on fine silk from 5s. to 3s. 6d., and on inferior from 5s. to 1s. 6d. This change only augmented the general clamour, as it threw numbers of persons engaged in working up raw silk out of employment, and serious riots took place in Bethnal Green and Spitalfields, during which property to a large amount was destroyed.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxi. 779, 782; Ann. Reg. 1829. 118; Martineau, i. 508.

10. The Budget of 1829.

The gradual recovery of the country from the monetary crisis of 1825, and the non-arrival as yet of the lowering effects of the suppression of small notes in March 1829, enabled the Chancellor of the Exchequer to exhibit a more cheering picture of the state of the finances than had been exhibited in the preceding year. The revenue of 1828 had been £55,187,000, and the expenditure £49,336,000, leaving a surplus applicable to the reduction of debt of £5,850,000. These figures deserve to be particularly noted, as affording a proof of the elasticity of the British finances, and the large sums which, notwithstanding the copious bleedings to which the Sinking Fund had been subjected, were still applicable to the reduction of the national debt, before the extinction of small notes, and consequent contraction of the currency, took full effect. It will appear in the sequel how woefully matters changed after this decisive contraction; and as Catholic emancipation was the last triumph of the nomination boroughholders, so this was the last year when any material reduction of the debt was effected.[2] In three years after

[2] Parl. Deb. xxi, 1170, 1231; Ann. Reg. 1820. 119, 121.

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this, the surplus entirely disappeared, and was succeeded by a course of years, during which, in a period of profound peace, considerable additions were annually made to the public debt.

11. Statement of Mr Attwood as to the causes of Irish distress and agitation.

The debate on this budget, however, elicited some facts regarding the state of the country, which threw an important light on the causes which had brought about the recent great change in Ireland, and were preparing a still greater in Great Britain. The former were thus stated by Mr Attwood: "In 1814, the last year of the war, the exportations from Ireland to Great Britain amounted to £5,100,000, official value—official value is the measure of quantity: this account exhibits the gross amount of corn, cattle, linen, salted provisions, and other commodities sent from Ireland to Great Britain in that year. But the prices of these articles were set down according to the old valuations in 1697; the real money value, which is the declared value, was £10,500,000. In 1816, the official value—that is, the quantity—was the same, but the money or declared value had sunk to £7,100,000; in other words, £3,400,000 was lost to Ireland on the exports alone, being 34 per cent, although the rents, taxes, and engagements of every kind remained the same. In 1817, the distress became such that Government was compelled to postpone for two years longer the Bank Restriction Act; and the consequence was, that in 1818 the exports of Ireland to Great Britain rose to £10,300,000—within a trifle of what they had been in the last year of the war. But in 1819 the Bank Restriction Act passed; and the consequence was, that though the productions exported rose in 1822, as measured by official value, to £6,100,000, the money value sunk to £7,000,000! For more work they got less than two-thirds of the return in money! Whoever considers these figures will have no difficulty in perceiving to what cause the whole subsequent difficulties and disturbances both of Great Britain and Ireland have been owing." [1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxi. 1231, 1232.

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How this state of things affected the general interests of industry throughout the country was demonstrated in a very clear way from the parliamentary returns by Mr Alderman Waithman. He pointed out the effect of the monetary system, introduced in 1819, on the manufacturing industry of Great Britain, in diminishing the money price of commodities, insomuch that while in seven years, from 1814 to 1820, though years of much distress, the excess of real or money value in exports was £41,000,000; in eight years, from 1821 to 1828, the excess of the official value over the real was £80,000,000! Including colonial produce, which had suffered extremely by the fall, the annual depreciation on goods exported between 1814 and 1828, a period of fourteen years, was £28,000,000 on £48,000,000, or 60 per cent.* Whoever considers this immense depreciation, and the effect it

12. Mr Waithman's exposition of the effect of the monetary system on manufactures.

* EXPORT OF MANUFACTURES AND PRODUCE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM FROM 1814 TO 1828, BOTH INCLUSIVE, WITH OFFICIAL AND REAL VALUE.

| Year. | Official Value. | Real Value. | Difference. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1814, | £36,092,167 | £47,851,153 | £11,759,286 |
| 1815, | 44,053,455 | 53,217,445 | 9,163,960 |
| 1816, | 36,697,610 | 42,942,951 | 6,228,398 |
| 1817, | 41,558,585 | 42,955,256 | 6,257,646 |
| 1818, | 44,564,044 | 43,696,253 | 2,097,668 |
| 1819, | 35,634,415 | 48,903,760 | 4,139,716 |
| 1820, | 40,240,277 | 37,339,506 | 1,705,091 |
| Excess of real over official value in seven years, | | | £41,521,795 |
| 1821, | £40,240,277 | £38,619,897 | £1,620,380 |
| 1822, | 40,831,744 | 36,659,631 | 4,172,113 |
| 1823, | 44,236,533 | 36,698,954 | 7,269,569 |
| 1824, | 43,804,372 | 35,458,048 | 8,346,324 |
| 1825, | 48,735,551 | 38,396,300 | 10,339,251 |
| 1826, | 40,965,735 | 31,536,723 | 9,429,012 |
| 1827, | 52,219,280 | 37,182,857 | 15,036,423 |
| 1828, | 52,797,455 | 36,814,176 | 15,988,279 |
| Excess of official over real value in eight years, | | | £80,532,795 |

Exports of Colonial produce, real value—average, 1814 to 1820, £14,517,378
Do. from 1821 to 1828 inclusive, . . . . . 9,992,688

Difference, . . . £4,524,690

—*Parl. Deb.* xxi. 1202.

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must have had on industry of every description, while taxes, bonds, bills, and money debts of every description remained the same, will have no difficulty in discerning what it was that uprooted the attachment to old institutions which is so remarkable a feature in the English character, and induced the agricultural distress in Ireland which paved the way for Catholic emancipation, and the general distress in Great Britain which brought on the Reform Bill.

13. Relations with Portugal, and refusal of the English Government to interfere in its concerns.

The only topic, during the remainder of the session of 1829, deserving of attention, was the state of our relations with Portugal, which are chiefly remarkable from the clear line which was drawn by the Duke of Wellington in regard to the duty of Great Britain as a neutral power, when that country was distracted by opposite factions contending for the crown. To understand how this came about, it is necessary to premise, what will be more fully detailed in the account of the transactions of Portugal, that a counter-revolution had taken place in Lisbon, in conformity with that which had resulted in Spain from the French invasion, and that DON MIGUEL, the uncle of the little queen, and the heir-male of the family, had been placed on the throne by the absolute party. The infant sovereign, Donna Maria, had been supported by the English interest, and she herself received with royal honours at Windsor. In consequence, an application was made to the British government to re-establish the constitutional throne in Portugal by force of arms; but to this application a negative was returned by the British government. "It is assumed," said Lord Aberdeen, the Foreign Secretary, "that the usurpation of the throne of Portugal by the Infant Don Miguel, has given to her most Faithful Majesty the right of demanding from this country effectual succours to recover her throne and kingdom. But in the whole series of the treaties there is no express stipulation which can warrant this pretension; neither is it warranted by their general

tenor or spirit. It is either for the purpose of exciting successful rebellion, or of deciding by force a doubtful question of succession, that Great Britain is now called upon to act. But it is impossible to suppose that any independent state could ever intend thus to commit the control and direction of its internal affairs to the hands of another power. The whole spirit of the treaties, as well as their history, shows that the principle of the guarantee given by England is the protection of Portugal from *foreign* interference only."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxi. 1633; Ann. Reg. 1829, 187.

14. The expedition to Terceira.

An opportunity soon occurred of putting these principles in practice, and of proving to the world that, however determined to protect her allies from foreign aggression, Great Britain would not interfere with their internal dissensions; and that she would concede to other countries the same right of choosing their sovereign and form of government which she had assumed to herself. A number of Portuguese refugees, most of them military men, had arrived in Great Britain, upon the occurrence of the revolution in Portugal, and, following the example of those who had so efficiently aided the South American revolution, they immediately began organising an expedition to restore the constitutional régime and the throne of Donna Maria. Upon receiving intelligence of these preparations, the British government informed the Brazilian minister that they could not permit such a breach of neutrality, and that the refugees, as a measure of precaution, would be directed to remove further from the coast. The envoy then stated that these troops were about to be conveyed to Brazil; and, accordingly, four vessels, having on board six hundred and fifty officers and men, sailed from Plymouth, with Count Saldanha, the minister-at-war under the Constitutional Government.[2]

[2] Ann. Reg. 1829, 188, 189; Martineau, i. 510, 511.

They were informed, before they set out, that, if they attempted a descent on any part of the Portuguese territories, they would be resisted by the British cruisers. They made straight, however, for Terceira, the largest of

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15. And is beat off by the British squadron. Jan. 16, 1830.

the Azores, which had declared for Don Miguel, and were met by Captain Walpole in the Ranger, who, after firing two shots in the air to bring them to, which failed of effect, discharged one at Saldanha's vessel, which killed one man and wounded another. This had the desired effect, and the squadron, after a strenuous effort to effect its object, returned to Brest. This proceeding made a great noise at the time, and was everywhere represented by the liberal party in Europe as an intervention of the British government in favour of Don Miguel. It is evident, however, that it was no such thing, but simply a *prevention* of *intervention by the Liberals*, which could not be permitted, according to the laws of neutrality, from the British shores. As such, it is important, as drawing the line between real neutrality and the covert intervention which often bears its name, and affords a striking contrast to the insidious conduct of preceding governments, which, while professing neutrality, allowed expeditions of ten and twelve thousand men to be fitted out in the Thames and at Portsmouth, which succeeded in revolutionising South America, and thereby brought unnumbered calamities upon both hemispheres.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxi. 1633; Ann. Reg. 1829, 189.

16. Great distress in Great Britain and Ireland during the whole of 1829.

But it was easier to pursue an honest straightforward course in regard to foreign states, which had become the subject of internal contests, than to preserve that contentment and tranquillity at home which might avert them from the British Islands. The great contraction of the currency consequent on the entire suppression of small notes, which took effect in March of this year, came to tell with decisive and appalling effect upon all branches of industry. Interest of money was low, and wages still lower—a sure proof, when coexisting, of want of employment for capital, and of failure in the demand for labour. "The interest of money," says Miss Martineau, a decided advocate for the cheapening system, "was never known to be lower, and the manufacturers' stocks, with which their shelves were too well loaded, *had suffered a depreciation of* 40 *per cent.*"[2] This

[2] Martineau, i. 539.

prodigious fall, which pervaded alike all branches of industry, both agricultural and manufacturing,* occasioned of course a vast diminution of imported articles,† and a corresponding and most distressing fall in wages, and in many places entire cessation in the demand for labour. At Huddersfield it appeared, from a report drawn up by a committee of masters, "that in the several townships occupied in fancy business there are 13,000 individuals who have not more than 2½d. a-day to live upon, and find wear and tear for looms." The same deplorable prostration of industry and reduction of wages took place in every branch of manufacturing industry, and in none more than the silk trade; and in consequence the sums expended for the relief of the poor in England and Wales, which in 1824 and 1825 had been on an average £5,750,000, rose in 1828, 1829, and 1830, to nearly £7,000,000 sterling.‡

* Price of Wheat, Cotton, Iron, &c., from 1827 to 1829.

| Years. | Wheat per Quarter. | Cotton per lb. | Iron per Ton. | Silk per lb. | Sugar per cwt. | Wool per lb. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *s. d.* | *s. d.* | *£ s.* | *s. d.* | *£ s.* | *s. d.* |
| 1827 | 50 2 | 0 10½ | 8 10 | 23 8 | 35 0 | 2 6 |
| 1828 | 71 8 | 0 8¾ | 7 10 | 23 6 | 32 0 | 2 6 |
| 1829 | 55 4 | 0 8 | 6 10 | 21 8 | 32 0 | 2 0 |

—Tooke *On Prices*, ii. 390, 420.

† Articles Imported from 1827 to 1829.

| Years. | Cotton. | Coffee. | Wool. | Raw Silk. | Silk Thread. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | lb. | lb. | lb. | lb. | lb. |
| 1827 | 272,448,909 | 47,938,947 | 29,115,341 | 3,146,926 | 463,801 |
| 1828 | 227,760,642 | 41,069,731 | 30,236,059 | 4,256,423 | 508,818 |
| 1829 | 222,767,411 | 39,071,215 | 21,516,649 | 3,594,754 | 211,179 |

—Tooke *On Prices*, ii. 391.

‡ Poor-Rate in England and Wales.

| Years. | £ | Years. | £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1823 . . | 5,772,958 | 1827 . . | 6,441,088 |
| 1824 . . | 5,736,898 | 1828 . . | 6,298,000 |
| 1825 . . | 5,786,989 | 1829 . . | 6,332,410 |
| 1826 . . | 5,928,501 | 1830 . . | 6,829,642 |

—Porter, 3d Edition, 90.

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17. Serious riots in many places.

This lamentable fall in the wages of labour was soon attended by its usual consequence—a variety of outbreaks and disturbances in the districts which were more immediately affected. Constrained by the general fall in the price of their produce to lessen the cost of production, the masters everywhere lowered the wages of their workmen, and this immediately gave rise to strikes and disturbances. A general strike took place at Macclesfield, and the delegates from Spitalfields openly recommended the destruction of looms by cutting out the silk. Ignorant of the real cause of their suffering, the whole vengeance of the workmen was directed against the engine-looms, the visible rival of their labour and the supposed source of their distress. The delegates assured them "the destroying angel was the best ally they had;" nor were they long of acting upon the advice. At Coventry, Nuneaton, and Bedworth, serious riots took place; and such was the terror produced by the violence of the workmen, that the masters generally gave in for a time to their demands. They soon found it impossible, however, at existing prices, to go on with such wages, and a reduction again took place. Upon this riots again ensued; and they were particularly violent at Barnsley in Yorkshire, where the combined workmen attacked the dwelling-houses of the obnoxious manufacturers, and deliberately piled their furniture in great heaps, to which they set fire. The workmen who had taken in work at the reduced prices were next assailed; and such was the alarm produced by this "reign of terror," as it was called, that they were compelled to return the materials they had received from their masters and join the strike. Nor were the disorders terminated but by the introduction of a large body of military.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1829, 132, 133; Martineau, i. 539, 540.

Ireland, being a purely agricultural country, in which it was impossible by the introduction of machinery to counterbalance the reduction in the price of produce—and the people being already at the starving point—

shared to a still greater degree in these causes of suffering, and the agitators were not slow in turning it to the best account. It soon appeared that emancipation had done nothing to conciliate the Catholics or heal the divisions of the country; it had only given the leaders a vantage-ground from whence to make fresh attacks on the constitution, and the people an example of the success which might be attained by well-organised agitation. Mr O'Connell had often declared, before the Relief Bill passed, that "Catholic emancipation would convert the great agitator into a mere *nisi prius* lawyer;" but when it was obtained, instead of keeping his word he immediately commenced a fresh agitation for the repeal of the Union. In this crusade he constantly referred to the carrying of the Relief Bill, not as a reason for pacification or a motive to gratitude, but as an incentive to renewed efforts and still more vital changes. "We have now," said he, at Youghal, "a brighter era opened to us, and I trust that all classes of my countrymen will unite together, and, by forming one firm general phalanx, achieve what is still wanting to make Ireland what it ought to be. Ireland had her 1782—she shall have another 1782. Let no man tell me it is useless to look for a repeal of the odious Union, that blot upon our national character. It is for the repeal of that measure that we must now use all the constitutional means in our power. That Union engenders absenteeism and all the thousand evils which naturally flow in its train. I want no disseveration; but I want, and must have, a repeal of that cursed measure which deprived Ireland of her senate, and thereby rendered her a dependant upon British aristocracy, British intrigue, and British interests. I pity the man who pronounces the attainment of such a consummation to be Utopian. Look at the Catholic question: do I not remember when it was difficult to obtain a meeting of five Catholics to look for a restoration of our then withheld rights? I recollect when we agitators

And in Ireland, where the agitation for the repeal of the Union commenced.

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were almost as much execrated by our fellow-slaves as we were by our oppressors. The contentions of religion are over, freedom has been obtained, but the people shall no longer be misrepresented; what has been done in one country shall be done in another; and all the Orangemen of the north, the Methodists of the south, shall join in one common cause, the restoration of Ireland's parliament. The new 'Society 1782' shall be formed, nor cease to spread its influence over Ireland till her parliament be restored, her sons be of one creed, all joined in the common cause of seeing old Ireland great and glorious among the nations of Europe." [1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1829, 127.

19. Serious riots between Protestants and Catholics in Ireland.

The Catholics were not slow in acting upon these recommendations, nor were the Protestants less eager in meeting the shouts of triumph by the notes of defiance. Then was seen how deadly was the animosity of the two creeds, and how vain the hope that a measure of equal justice could reconcile two great parties, each of which was vehemently contending for the mastery. Conflicts more serious, exasperation more violent, bloodshed more deplorable ensued than had been known, save in the rebellion of 1798, in the whole recent annals of Ireland. The 12th July, the anniversary of the battle of the Boyne, and well-known season of Orange glorification in Ireland, was the signal for general disturbance. "The country," says the annalist, "was armed for civil war; its condition was much more alarming than it had been when it was to be cured by the Relief Bill. *Emancipation* might be Ireland's ark, but it was sent abroad to float over noisy and troubled waters." In the county of Clare the two parties met, one side armed with muskets and bayonets, the other with scythes and pitchforks; one man was killed, and seven or eight wounded on each side. In Armagh a contest ensued in which ten men were slain; the county of Fermanagh assumed the aspect of open war. Eight hundred Catholics, armed with the usual rustic weapons, attacked the Protestants, four of whom were

killed, and seven wounded. Catholics to the number of some thousands formed an encampment on Benauglen mountain, to which reinforcements speedily poured in from the adjoining counties of Leitrim, Cavan, and Monaghan, in which the presence of a large body of military alone prevented civil war from openly breaking out; while in Tipperary the disturbances came to such a pass, that at a numerous meeting of the magistracy, held in the middle of September, it was unanimously resolved to memorialise the Government to renew the Insurrection Act, to pass an Arms Act, rendering the possession of them a transportable offence, and to multiply the number of military posts through the country, as the only means of averting open rebellion.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1829, 129, 131; Martineau, i. 540.

20. Meeting of Parliament. Feb. 4, 1830.

It was amidst these scenes of distress and disorder that Parliament met in the beginning of February, and the speech from the throne bore testimony to the general suffering which prevailed. His Majesty stated "that the exports in the last year of British produce and manufactures had exceeded that of any former year. He laments that, notwithstanding this indication of an active commerce, distress should prevail among the agricultural and manufacturing classes in some parts of the United Kingdom. It would be most gratifying to the paternal feelings of his Majesty to be enabled to propose for your consideration measures calculated to remove the difficulties of any portion of his subjects, and at the same time compatible with the general interests of his people. Though the national income in the last year has not attained the full amount at which it had been estimated, the diminution is not such as to cause any doubt as to the future prosperity of the revenue. The estimates have been framed with the utmost regard to economy, and his Majesty hopes to be able to make a considerable reduction in the amount of the public expenditure, without impairing the efficiency of our naval and military establishments." These words are very remarkable, for they at once indi-

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cate the cause of past suffering, and the necessities which were to prescribe future policy. An augmentation beyond all former precedent of exports was attended with financial embarrassment and general distress, which compelled the most rigid economy! Inconsistent as these things may appear, they are not so in reality, and subsequent experience has proved that they are often cause and effect. Pecuniary embarrassment, arising from a general fall of prices, often leads *for a time* to an increase of production, in the hope of compensating by quantity what has become awanting in price; and a great increase in the amount of produce arises from the very difficulties of those engaged in the work of production.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxii. 2, 3; Ann. Reg. 1830, 5, 6.

21. Interesting debate on the public distress in the House of Lords.

The debate which ensued on the Address was still more characteristic of the state of the country, and the lamentable consequences of the contraction of the currency, and consequent prostration of industry, which was destined, ere long, to produce such great and lasting effects on its future destinies. No one attempted to deny the existence of great and severe distress; the only question was, whether it was partial or universal. Earl Stanhope, who moved the amendment in the House of Lords, maintained the latter. "The speech from the throne," said he, "spoke of distress in some parts of the country; but what part of the country was it in which Ministers had not found distress prevailing, and that, too, general, not partial? The kingdom is in a state of universal distress—one likely to be unequalled in its duration, as it is intolerable in its pressure, unless Parliament thinks fit to inquire for a remedy. It is not confined to agriculture, it has extended to manufactures, to trade, and to commerce. All these great interests had never before, at one time, been at so low an ebb, nor in a condition which demanded more loudly the prompt and energetic interference of Parliament. The speech ascribed the distress which was so universal to a bad harvest; but did a bad harvest make corn cheap? and yet it is the excessive reduction of prices

which is now felt as so great an evil, especially by the agricultural classes. The evil is so notorious that nobody but the King's ministers doubts its existence; and how can even they feasibly pretend to deny its existence? And how could even they pretend to deny it, if they cast their eyes around, and saw the counties spontaneously pouring on them every kind of solicitation for relief, while in towns Mr Alderman Waithman has attested that stocks of every kind have sunk in value 40 per cent?

22. Concluded.

"There can be no doubt to what this universal distress is owing; it is to be ascribed to the erroneous basis on which our currency has been placed since 1819. Prices have not fallen in agricultural produce only; the depression has been *continuous and universal ever since the Bank Restriction Act passed, and especially since the suppression of small notes took effect in the beginning of last year.* We are gravely told that the depression of butter and cheese is owing to the wetness of the last season and the superabundance of grass. Did anybody ever hear of an unfavourable season lowering the price at once of wheat and cattle, of oats and wool? Yet all these things have sunk in value together; and in manufactures and traders' stocks the fall has been so great, that in the last ten years it has amounted to 68 per cent. Such a universal and continued depression can be ascribed only to some cause pressing alike upon *all* branches of industry, and that cause is to be found in the enormous contraction of the currency which has taken place. When we recollect that the Bank of England notes in circulation have been reduced from £30,000,000 to £20,000,000, and the country bankers' in a still greater proportion, it is easy to see whence the evil has arisen, and where a remedy is to be found."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxii. 13, 14; Ann. Reg. 1830, 6, 7.

23. Duke of Wellington's reply.

"Bad seasons," said the Duke of Wellington in reply, "are not set down as the only cause of distress; but as there has been undoubtedly one bad harvest, and another got in at an unusual expense, they are circumstances to

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be taken into consideration. Competition at home and abroad is the cause of distress among the manufacturers, and can Parliament prevent that? Can it prohibit the use of machinery and the use of steam, which, by throwing labourers out of employment, produce distress? The suffering is not universal; there are parts of the country which are entirely free from it. The exports of last year were greater than any former one, and there is not a canal or railway in the country which does not present an increase of traffic. Profits are small; but they must exist, otherwise business would not be carried on. Is there any distress among the retail dealers in towns, who form a large class? Were those distressed persons who could pay the rents of the shops, which were everywhere enlarged or improved, or of the elegant streets and villas which were springing up around the metropolis and all our great towns? Pressure upon the country there undoubtedly is, but not so great as to prevent it from rising, though slowly. It is not falling, it is improving.

24. Concluded.

"There is no foundation for the assertion so confidently made, that the currency has been contracted, and that that is the cause of the suffering which exists. So far from it, the circulation now is larger than it was when the bank restriction existed.* The truth is, it is not extended circulation, but unlimited circulation, which is

* The Duke's statement on this point was as follows :—

*Highest during the War.—England.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Bank of England Notes, | £30,000,000 |
| Country Banks, | 23,000,000 |
| Gold, | 4,000,000 |
| Silver, | 7,000,000 |
| Total, | £64,000,000 |

*Circulation in 1830.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Bank of England Notes, | £19,900,000 |
| Country Bank-notes, | 9,200,000 |
| Gold, | 28,000,000 |
| Silver, | 8,000,000 |
| Total, | £65,100,000 |

—*Parl. Deb.*, vol. xxii. p. 39.

desired; in other words, it is wished to give certain individuals, not the Crown, the power of coining in the shape of paper, and of producing a fictitious capital. Recollect how narrowly the country escaped the effects of this ruinous system in 1825 and 1826. Capital is always forthcoming when it is wanted. Any scheme, if only a little plausible, is sure to find capital for the purpose of carrying it on. There was no government, however bankrupt, that could not borrow money here; and there was no man in the country, who had anything like security to offer, but could get money whenever he wanted it." [1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxii. 34, 42; Ann. Reg. 1830, 9, 10.

25. Narrow division, and declared changes in Parliament.

The division which took place on this debate in the Commons was very significant, and ominous of future and impending change both in the Government and the constitution. The majority for Ministers was only 53; the numbers being 158 to 105. But close as this division was, it became doubly ominous from the manner in which the leading members of the House now arranged themselves. The ultra-Tories—Sir Edward Knatchbull, Mr Bankes, General Gascoigne, Mr Sadler—were to be found in the minority, alongside of Sir Francis Burdett, Lord John Russell, Mr Brougham, Mr Hume, and Lord Althorpe, the chiefs of the Whigs and Radicals; and Lord Palmerston, Mr Charles Grant, Sir Stratford Canning, Mr Huskisson, and Sir George Warrender, the remnants of the Canning party. No such strange and disjointed amalgamation of parties had been witnessed since the famous coalition in 1784, which preceded the fall of the Whigs and long ascendancy of the Tories. It was evident that the old Tory party, so long firm and united, had been completely broken up by the heart-burnings and irritation consequent on Catholic emancipation, and that the general distress had given the various classes of malcontents a common ground on which they could unite, without abandoning or compromising any of their peculiar and declared principles. [2] The habit of supporting Government and ministerial influence might give

[2] Parl. Deb. xxii. 121; Ann. Reg. 1830, 17, 18.

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the Cabinet a majority over such a coalition for a time, but it could be for a time only; and on the first serious reverse or occurrence of any external cause of excitement, it would infallibly be shipwrecked.

26. Critical and painful position of the Duke of Wellington.

In truth, the Duke of Wellington's position as prime-minister, so far from being an enviable one, was among the most critical and painful that could be imagined. He had climbed to the pinnacle of power, but he had there found its loneliness, and experienced its ingratitude. Like Mr Burke, after his secession from the Whigs in 1793, he might have said, "There is a severance which cannot be healed; I have lost my old friends, and am too old to make new ones." He had no party in the House of Commons, no real colleagues in the Cabinet. He was a commander-in-chief there, surrounded by his generals of division, but not a premier aided by the counsels of his followers. He felt the solitude of his situation, and was aware of the necessity of conciliating some of the Whig magnates. Accordingly, on the death of the Chief Baron of Scotland, he appointed Mr Abercromby, an English lawyer and commissioner for the Duke of Devonshire, to that office, instead of the Lord-Advocate of Scotland, Sir W. Rae, whose position entitled him to expect, and whose long and able services in that situation gave him a right to claim it. Encouraged by this step, which seemed to indicate an intention on the part of the premier to follow the example of Mr Canning, and form a coalition cabinet, the Whigs in the early part of the session abstained from any direct attacks upon Ministers, and even on some occasions gave them their support. They were loud in praise of both the Duke and Mr Peel for their conduct on the Catholic question, describing it as "a more glorious triumph than any which had been won on the fields of Spain."[1] But their expectations were not realised; the Cabinet doors were not opened; and their leaders, smarting under the bitterness of disappointed hopes, gave vent to their feelings in the most acrimonious

[1] Roebuck, History of the Whigs, i. 137, 139; Martineau, i. 541, 542.

expressions, and prepared for a course of the most uncompromising hostility. *

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27. Reflections on the Duke's explanation.

The Duke of Wellington's speech on the distresses of the country met the question boldly and openly, in his usual straightforward way; but nothing can be more evident than that it involved the most obvious fallacies. He said that the currency, including gold and silver, was as large as it had been at the highest period during the war—forgetting that, since its termination, the nation had advanced a fourth in numbers, and a half in industry and commerce, and that, to render the currency commensurate to its necessities, it should not have remained the same, but advanced in a similar proportion.† Probably the Duke would have given a sharp answer to his Commissary-General, in 1813, if he had proposed the same amount of rations for his army, then 75,000

* "When I find," said Sir F. Burdett, "the prime-minister of England so shamefully insensible to suffering and distress, which are painfully apparent throughout the land; when, instead of meeting such an overwhelming pressure of necessity with some measure of relief, or some attempt at relief, he seeks to stifle every important inquiry; when he calls that a partial and temporary evil, which is both long-lived and universal, I cannot look on such a mournful crisis, in which public misfortune is insulted by ministerial apathy, without hailing any prospect of change in the system which has produced it. What shall we say to the ignorance which can attribute our distresses to the introduction of machinery and the application of steam, that noble improvement in the inventions of man, to which men of science and intelligence mainly ascribe our prosperity? I feel a high and unfeigned respect for that illustrious person's abilities in the field; but I cannot help thinking that he did himself no less than justice when he said, a few months before he accepted office, that he should be a fit inmate for an asylum of a peculiar nature, if he ever were induced to take such a burden on his shoulders. In fact, both myself and very many honourable members about me, have long treated this illustrious individual with much tenderness, because we felt he has conferred the greatest benefits upon his country. He is the only man who could have accomplished what he has done, and be his praise in proportion. But let it at the same time be remembered, that, if his service was great, his recompense has been commensurate. We have repaid him abundantly in returns of confidence and approbation. The time, however, is come when it will be necessary to do much more."—*Mirror of Parliament*, vol. i. p. 67.

| Years. | Exports—Official Value. | Population—United Kingdom. |
|---|---|---|
| † 1814 . . . . . | £36,092,167 ... | 18,564,000 |
| 1825 . . . . . | 52,797,455 ... | 23,784,421 |

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, pp. 8, 11, 3d edition.

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strong, which had sufficed for it in the preceding year, when it was 45,000 only. He forgot that, though the currency, upon the whole, might be the same as during the war, yet the proportion of it which consisted in paper had sunk from £53,000,000 to £28,000,000; and that it is a very different thing, as every person engaged in industry knows, to obtain advances from bankers when made in their own notes, which may be with safety four times their solid capital, and when made in sovereigns or Bank of England notes, when they can only be measured by that solid capital itself. He referred to the striking increase of houses and evident marks of riches in great cities, which was undoubtedly true, seemingly not aware that that was a proof of the existence and universality of the very evil complained of, which was that, from the change in the value of money, the realised wealth in the towns had increased 50 per cent, and the remuneration of industry in the country decreased in a similar proportion; and that it only confirmed the common adage, that the rich were every day becoming richer, and the poor poorer. Above all, he took it for granted, in the statement which he made as to the amount of gold currency in circulation (£28,000,000), that the whole gold which had been coined since 1819 was *still at home*, forgetting how large a proportion of it had been withdrawn in the immense loans to foreign countries contracted since that period, and remitted to South America for mining speculations undertaken by English capitalists in that quarter, and overlooking the certainty of the continuance and increase of the drain upon the metallic resources of this country, owing to the supply of the precious metals for the general use of the globe having, from the effects of the revolution in South America, sunk to a fourth of its former amount.

Aware of the universal cry for relief from distress which pervaded the country, the Opposition, when they felt themselves at liberty to resume active operations

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upon the disappointment of their hopes of being admitted into the Cabinet, bent all their energies to force the most extensive reductions of expenditure upon the Government. They did not venture in a body openly to face the question of the contraction of the currency, fearful of exciting the jealousy of the capitalists by whom that great change had been introduced, and whose fortunes had been so largely augmented by it, or perhaps ignorant of its vital importance on the matter of general distress which occupied universal attention; but all sections of the Opposition united on the common ground of demanding a reduction of the national expenditure, which was, in truth, a necessary consequence of the great reduction made in the nation's resources. Sir James Graham, on the 12th February, moved for a reduction of the salaries of all persons holding offices under Government, in proportion to the enhanced value of money produced by the Bank Restriction Act. "The operation of that act," he said, "had been twofold: it added to the weight of all fixed payments, while it lowered wages and the price of provisions. Hence the miserable state to which the people of this country were now reduced, and the necessity of rigid, unsparing economy—inviolable, inflexible justice; and in that system of economy, one great source of retrenchment must be the reduction of the salaries of those who had their hands in the public purse. Justice requires, necessity demands it. High prices, and nothing else, produced by a depreciated currency, had brought them high salaries; low prices, by curing that depreciation, must bring them low salaries." So strong was the feeling of the House on this question that the Ministers did not venture to oppose it openly, but evaded it by an amendment, which was unanimously agreed to, for a petition to his Majesty to cause "an inquiry to be made into all the departments of the civil government,[1] with a view of reducing the number of persons employed

28. Sir James Graham's motion for a reduction of the salaries of public officers.

[1] Parl. Deb. xxii. 442, 446; Mirror of Parliament, v. 171.

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in the various services, and the amount of the salaries paid."*

29. Mr Hume's motion for a reduction of the army and navy lost. Feb. 15.

Following in the same path thus successfully entered upon, Mr Hume, a few days after, proposed a great and sweeping reduction of the army and navy, the former of which he proposed to be reduced by 20,000 men, and the latter by a sum of £1,500,000, and other savings, by which he estimated that a diminution in expenditure to the extent of no less than £8,000,000 might be effected. This great reduction was based upon the estimates of 1792, and on the alleged pacification of Ireland, now that the Catholics had obtained emancipation, forgetting that the empire had nearly doubled in numbers, and more than doubled in colonial dependencies and necessity for defence since that period, and that so far from Ireland having been pacified by the Relief Bill, it was now in a more disturbed state, and more required the presence of a large military force, than ever. In this

* On this occasion Sir James Graham made the following remarks, which, however true at the time, were perhaps more to be admired for their oratorical power than their statesmanlike wisdom: "Sir, I have heard something of the luxury of the present times. I do not know whether the example was drawn from the gorgeous palaces of kings, or the rival palaces of ministers, splendidly provided for them by the public, or from the banquets of some East India Director, gorged with the monopoly of the China trade, or from some Jew contractor, who supplies hostile armies with gold drawn from the coffers of the Bank of England, and lends money to France arising out of profits or loans contracted here in depreciated paper, but which must be paid in gold;—but I must take leave to remark that we ought not to draw our notions of the state of the country from scenes such as these.

'Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor decay,
'Tis yours to judge how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land.'

"Where, I ask, are all the boasted advantages of this once happy country? where are all the blessings which once distinguished her? where are all the comforts which her children enjoyed for ages? Alas! with deep regret I witness that all, all are gone. Pinching hunger and gloomy despair now usurp their station. The weavers throughout the country are only earning 4s. 2d. a-week, and their food is oatmeal, water, and potatoes. They work fourteen or sixteen hours a-day, and yet they can only earn this scanty pittance to support their wives and families. It is an extraordinary fact, that by dint of labour the power-looms (which were supposed to have caused their distress) are absolutely underwrought by these almost starving people."—*Mirror of Parliament*, vol. i. p. 171.

instance, accordingly, the Opposition were unsuccessful. The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that the forthcoming estimates had been prepared with the greatest attention to economy, and would be found to make as great reductions as were consistent with the public safety. The Whig leaders stood aloof, fearful of tying up their own hands when they succeeded to office, as there was every prospect of their soon doing; and Lord Palmerston and the Canning party objected to any considerable reduction in the forces in the colonies, with the necessities of which they were well acquainted. The Radical party, therefore, were on this occasion reduced to their real strength, and the motion was lost by a majority of 110; the numbers being 167 to 57.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1830, 40, 42; Parl. Deb. xxii. 482, 587.

Still the Opposition were not discouraged; the clamour for a reduction of expenditure in proportion to the diminution in the income of all the working classes in the nation was so violent, that, prudent or imprudent, willing or unwilling, they were obliged to yield obedience to it. On 25th March, Mr Poulett Thomson brought forward a motion for the appointment of a committee for a general revision of the system of taxation, resting the demand on the great reduction which might be effected in the cost of collecting the revenue by a change of system, and the absolute necessity of having recourse to it immediately, from the general distress which prevailed, and the consequent reduction in the national income which was going forward. Mr Peel resisted the motion, not on general grounds, as to which he was quite in accordance with the mover, but on the special plea that the appointment of a committee charged with so momentous a duty as that of reporting on the whole system of taxation, was a virtual delegation of the most important duties of Government and the House to a fraction of its members. These views prevailed, and the motion was lost by a majority of 167 to 78.[2]

30. Mr Thomson's motion for a revision of the system of taxation. March 25.

[2] Parl. Deb. xxiii. 127, 146; Ann. Reg. 1830, 46, 53.

It soon appeared, however, that the coalition against

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Ministers had lost nothing of its power, and that nothing was awanting to render it victorious but an opportunity on which the various parties which composed it might unite without compromising their prospects when they succeeded to power. Such an opportunity soon occurred. On the very next day, in a committee of supply on the navy estimates, Ministers were thrown into a minority on a purely party question, regarding Mr R. Dundas and Mr W. L. Bathurst, two junior commissioners of the navy, whose united salary was only £900 a-year, who were struck off by a majority of 139 to 121. Encouraged by this success, Sir James Graham moved a few days after that the salary of the Treasurer of the Navy should be abolished, and the duties of the office transferred to the President of the Board of Trade, with which it had at one time been united. This motion, however, was rejected by 188 to 90, and the same fate attended several other motions for the reduction of particular offices made by the same indefatigable member. These repeated divisions on particular offices were indicative of the state of feeling of the leaders of the Whig party, who, chagrined at not being admitted to a participation of office by the Duke of Wellington, took this mode of at once showing their displeasure and swelling the cry for economical reduction, by evincing the reluctance of Ministers to yield obedience to it.[1]

31. Ministers beat on a minor question. March 26.

1 Ann. Reg. 1830, 49, 63; Roebuck, i. 152, 162.

These were mere party moves, intended to displace a ministry without embarrassing their successors, and convert the suffering of the moment into the means of political advancement. But there were not awanting those who took a nobler as well as a juster view of the general distress, and boldly pointed out its cause in the policy regarding monetary matters—so profitable to realised capital, so ruinous to laborious industry—which had for ten years been pursued by the Government. The subject was brought before the House of Commons by the two men in the kingdom most competent to master it,

32. Motion of Mr Attwood on the currency.

Mr Attwood and Mr Baring, who moved that a gold and silver standard should be substituted for the gold one, and that the act for prohibiting the issue of bank-notes below £5 in England and Ireland should be repealed. Nothing could be more convincing than the arguments and facts by which these very eminent men supported the motion, or more sophistical than those by which it was resisted; but it was all in vain. The House was resolved not to be convinced: the interests of realised wealth had become so powerful in the legislature that those of industry were overpowered; and the debate—the last which took place on the subject before the irrevocable change the existing system had brought about was introduced—remains a memorable and instructive monument for all future times of the manner in which the plainest truths can be disregarded when they run adverse to the interests of a powerful section of society, and a course of policy can be persisted in fraught with consequences which those who originated it are to be the first to regret.[1] *

[1] Ann. Reg. 1830, 71, 72.

But although Ministers persisted in shutting their eyes

* On the one hand, it was maintained by Mr Attwood and Mr Baring: "It was in the power of the legislature to inflict upon the country such a metallic currency, and in such circumstances as they chose, but it was not in their power to control the effects of such a change. Introduced in 1819, rendered more stringent in 1826 and 1829, it had altered the nature of all contracts, and, for the great profit of capitalists and fundholders, spread ruin through the industrious classes in the country. During former periods there had been, it is true, many instances of some local or temporary distress, but they had been passing only, and the general career of national prosperity had been upon the whole uninterrupted. But when the act of the legislature forced us back to a metallic currency, distress, universal in its extent, and deplorable in its effects, followed upon the change; and such distress had regularly occurred whenever we approached even the ruinous measure of setting up an exclusive gold currency. In 1816 the first effort was made to return to the gold currency; but the difficulty was to find the gold, for it had been taken to the Continent during the war, where it had at one time been purchased for £5, 12s. an ounce. In 1819 an act of Parliament was passed, by which the Bank of England was obliged to retire its notes in gold, valued at £3, 17s. 10½d. an ounce. We could not, however, get back the gold without altering and raising the value of the paper money which we gave in exchange for it, which was done by a great and rapid contraction of the currency. The consequence was, that general ruin and unheard-of suffering were experienced by the productive and manu-

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33. Financial measures, and great reductions of Government.

to the real cause of the distress, which was producing such a ferment throughout the country, they were fully aware of its existence and vehemence, and were determined to meet it in the only way which was possible, while upholding the monetary system, which was by the most rigid and unsparing economy. Never before had the pruning-hook been applied with so fearless and unsparing a hand to every branch of the public expenditure; and, in truth, so many and powerful were the interests bent upon upholding it, that nothing but the personal weight and determination of the Duke of Wellington could have carried through the reductions. The income realised in the preceding year had fallen £560,000 short of what had been anticipated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in bringing forward the budget of the year before;[1] but, nothing deterred by that circumstance, the Duke set about a series of reductions in every department

[1] Ann. Reg. 1830, 75, 82.

facturing classes throughout the empire, while the capitalists were proportionally enriched.

"We then, in some degree, retraced our steps. We expanded the currency, and postponed the threatened resumption of cash payments, and the prosperity of 1818 was the consequence. It did not, however, long continue; for the measures adopted in 1819 for changing the standard again brought distress and ruin on the country. Why was the prosperity of the year 1818 less durable than that which preceded it? Simply because the act of 1819 fell upon it and dispersed it.

"The intense suffering of 1820, 1821, and 1822 at length forced a measure of relief upon the Government, which was effected by the prolongation, in the last of these years, for ten years longer, of the right to issue notes below £5, then on the point of expiring in terms of the act of 1819. What was the consequence? Prosperity again returned, like the sun emerging from behind the clouds, and shedding the light of his radiance and the warmth of his beams on a grateful earth. The prosperity of 1823, 1824, and 1825 was without precedent in this country; but it was as short-lived as it was brilliant. Why was this? Simply because the act of 1819 was long-lived, and curtailed its existence. That the act of 1819 had produced these effects, must become evident to any person who looks closely at the history of the country since its date. Four months before that act passed, the Prince-Regent, in a speech from the throne, declared the trade, commerce, and manufactures of the country to be in a most flourishing condition; and in fact in the course of that year the revenue of the country increased £4,700,000. Within six months after the passing of the act of 1819 he was obliged to call Parliament unexpectedly together, in consequence of the disaffection generated by distress in the manufacturing districts. It was relieved, but how? Solely by departing from the principle of a metallic currency, and issuing £4,000,000 by the Bank in the

of the public service, which enabled him not only to face it, but to present to the House a surplus of no less than £3,400,000 available to the reduction of taxation, still leaving an excess of income over expenditure of £2,667,000 applicable to the reduction of debt.

34. Taxes remitted on beer, leather, and cider.

The taxes remitted in consequence of these great reductions were very considerable, insomuch that even the Whig opposition admitted that this year of general distress and diminished national income was distinguished by a greater reduction of taxation than had taken place in any year since the peace. The taxes selected for remission were the beer-duty, estimated at £3,000,000; that on leather, £350,000; and that on cider, £25,000: in all, £3,400,000,—to commence on the 10th of next October. To meet these great reductions, the duty on English spirits was raised from 7s. to 8s. a gallon, and on Scotch and Irish from 2s. 10d. to 3s., which would

shape of loans to the distressed manufacturers. When the banks, by the act of 1822, were allowed to continue small notes in their issues, prosperity returned, insomuch that, on opening the session of 1825, the King told the Parliament the country had never been so prosperous. At the close of that year, the country was in a woeful state of distress, occasioned by the contraction of the currency by £3,500,000 between March and December, in consequence of the drain of gold which had set in from South America, and the crisis was only surmounted by the sudden issue of £6,000,000 additional notes in the last of these months. In a word, whenever the currency is plentiful, we are in a state of prosperity and contentment; the moment it is restricted, we fall into a state of misery, and are on the verge of revolution."[1]

1 Parl. Deb. xxiii. 487, 524; Ann. Reg. 1830, 11, 12.

Answer of the Government.

On the other hand, it was contended by Mr Harris and Mr Huskisson: "That the project of having a double standard would land the country in utter confusion. The plan proposed was to have the relative value of gold and silver fixed as it was in 1798, whereas it was well known that the relative value was different from what it had been at that period. That difference was now 5 per cent. Every debtor therefore, if the double standard were adopted, would hasten to pay it in the silver standard, and so the creditor would lose 5 per cent on his debt. Would not the whole country present a scene of confusion and ruin if the House of Commons were to enact that every man who did not instantly recover payment of his debt would lose 5 per cent upon it? Silver never was, in practice, the standard of the country. In practice, independent of the law, silver had never been in a state to be used as a legal tender. Latterly the law had enacted that it should not be a legal standard beyond £25. By weight, indeed, it was a legal tender to any amount, but practically it had become so depreciated that there was no such thing as a standard by weight." Mr Attwood's resolutions were negatived without a division.[2]

2 Ann. Reg. 1830, 73, 74.

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yield an increase of £330,000 a-year; and a more efficient resource was provided in the reduction of the interest of the 4 per cents to 3½, which it was calculated would afford a relief to the extent of £750,000. Looking to the probable increase of the revenue in other departments, by the effect of the reductions proposed in this year, it was calculated that the probable amount of the real surplus applicable to the reduction of debt would be £2,400,000 a-year.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxiii. 124, 137; Ann. Reg. 1830, 80, 81.

35. Great satisfaction at the Budget, and its entire failure to relieve the general distress.

This budget, as is always the case *in the outset* with one which proposes a great reduction of taxation, was extremely popular, and won for Ministers, for a brief season, golden opinions from all classes of men. Even the most decided of the Liberals gave the Duke credit for unsparing economy, and confessed "that this session had given the most important financial relief to the nation of any since the peace; and the acknowledgment of this by the liberal members was full and gracious."[2] Yet did the reductions, from which so much was expected, entirely fail to give any sensible relief to the nation, or alleviate, in any degree, the general distress which prevailed in consequence of the ruinous fall of prices. On the contrary, in the face of the reduction in expenditure and taxation, which had elicited such unbounded applause from the liberal leaders and press, the distress went on accumulating, until in this very year it induced a change in the Ministry, and in less than two years an entire revolution in the constitution!—a striking proof of the fallacy of the remedial measures, on which the Opposition at that period were so strongly set. It is not surprising it was so, for the proposed reductions only relieved the nation to the extent of three or four millions; whereas the monetary laws, by cutting at least 50 per cent from the remuneration of all branches of industry, commercial and agricultural, had reduced the incomes of the industrious classes to the extent of a hundred and fifty millions yearly.

[2] Martineau, i. 545.

Mr Baring's speech on the abandonment of the Sinking Fund.

These reductions, however, such as they were, revealed the perilous nature of the descent on which the nation had embarked, and the evident approaching ABANDONMENT OF THE SINKING FUND, so long and justly regarded as the palladium of the nation, its sheet-anchor alike in prosperous and adverse fortune. This melancholy topic did not escape the notice of Mr Baring, who, amidst the chorus of Liberal flattery and approbation at the proposed reductions, had the courage to express the following just and manly sentiments: "Mr Pitt, at the time when he proposed the Sinking Fund in 1786, said, 'To you do the public turn their eye, justly expecting that, from the trust you hold, you will make the most strenuous efforts in order to afford them the long-wished-for prospect of being relieved from an endless accumulation of taxes, under the burden of which they are ready to sink. Upon the debate of this day do they place all their hopes of a full return of prosperity and security, which will give confidence and vigour to those exertions in trade and commerce upon which the flourishing state of this country so much depends. To behold the country emerging from a most unfortunate war, which added such an accumulation to sums before immense, that it was the belief of the surrounding nations, and of many among ourselves, that our powers must fail us, and that we should sink under our difficulties; to behold this nation, instead of despairing at its alarming condition, looking its situation boldly in the face, and establishing, upon a permanent plan, the means of relieving itself from all its encumbrances, must give such an idea of our resources, and of our spirit of exertion, as will astonish the nations around us, and enable us to regain that pre-eminence to which, on many accounts, we were so justly entitled.'[1] These were the words of Mr Pitt, which were re-echoed by Mr Fox, who, struck with the necessity of giving increased stability to the principle of security on which the public creditor relied, stifled, on this occasion, the eager spirit of party

[1] Parl. Hist. xxv. 1296.

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which at that time animated the House of Commons, and so exhibited a contrast, he regretted to say, to the degeneracy in the present time, when, within and without that House, no repugnance is shown to a total departure from those just principles upon which Mr Pitt mainly relied to conquer our impending difficulties.

37. Continued.

"The proposed reduction of taxation is £3,400,000. It is provided for by £2,667,000, being the existing surplus of income over expenditure, by £330,000 a-year from the increased duty on spirits, and £110,000 from stamps. The whole would amount to £3,070,000; leaving £330,000 a-year to be still provided for, *after applying to the reduction every farthing of the Sinking Fund.* We have lived to see the time when a minister appeared in the House, and, after frittering away, on one pretence or another, all the benefits which were hoped to be drawn from the Sinking Fund, finally proposed to sweep away altogether the income laid by for its maintenance! Means might and should have been found to support this fund; but if we are to adopt the doctrines expounded in the market-place—if we are not to look at the consequence of being compelled to go to war, but, on the contrary, to obey the recommendations, and chime in with the prejudices, and act according to the political wisdom to be heard at Penenden Heath, or in the market-place at Chelmsford, then the credit, the honour, the interest, and the power of this country must ultimately sink with the weakness which permitted the House to listen to such suggestions. Mr Pitt, when he established the Sinking Fund, had declared 'that no minister would ever have the confidence to come down to the House, and propose the repeal of a measure the tendency of which was to relieve the people of their burdens; and that to suffer that fund *at any time, or on any pretence,* to be diverted from its proper object, would be to ruin, defeat, and overturn the whole plan. He hoped, therefore, that the House would hold itself solemnly pledged never to listen

to any proposal for its repeal on any pretence whatever.'[1] Yet after, during a long course of years, the Sinking Fund had been frittered away on various pretences, it is now proposed to abolish it entirely, and leave the debt for ever a crushing burden upon the nation, by appropriating the whole surplus, and more than the surplus, to the remission of taxation. Even if the modified Sinking Fund of £5,000,000 yearly, which Parliament so solemnly pledged itself, in 1819, to keep up inviolate,[2] had been maintained, the House would now have had a surplus of above £7,000,000 to apply to the reduction of debt, and instead of entertaining a proposal for the reduction of interest on the Four per Cents, the whole of the debt at this moment might have been converted into terminable annuities, and its entire extinction insured at no distant period." These remarks made no sort of impression, and the ministerial budget, repealing taxes to such an extent as to extinguish the last remnant of the Sinking Fund, passed without a division, amidst a chorus of approbation from both sides of the House, and in particular the warmest applause from the Liberal opposition.[3]

[1] Parl. Hist. xxv. 1309.

[2] Ante, c. iv. § 81.

[3] Parl. Deb. xxiii. 325, 327; Ann. Reg. 1830, 82, 84.

38. Reflections on the abandonment of the Sinking Fund.

We have now reached a turning-point in English history—that when the Sinking Fund was practically abandoned, and the nation voluntarily took the whole public debt as a permanent and irremovable burden on itself. That this has been the case is evident from this decisive fact, that the unredeemed debt was considerably less in this year than it was in 1854, when the Russian war broke out! * Three-and-twenty years of unbroken Continental peace has been attended with no other effect than adding eight millions to the national debt—although, during the fifteen preceding years, mutilated as the Sinking Fund had been by successive administrations, a very

* Unredeemed debt in 1830, . . . . £757,486,997
Ditto in 1852, . . . . . 765,126,582

Added to funded debt in twenty-two years, . £7,639,585

—PORTER'S *Parliamentary Tables*, i. 6; and *Finance Tables*, 1853.

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sensible reduction in this debt had been effected, for it had been diminished by seventy-five millions.* It is a melancholy reflection that twenty-three years of subsequent peace has brought only an increase of the debt, and that its redemption is now, by common consent, regarded as hopeless. It is the more so, when it is recollected that the Sinking Fund, at the close of the war, amounted to £15,000,000 annually; and that, if it had not been subsequently broken upon by successive administrations, it would have entirely extinguished the debt by the year 1845.[1]

[1] Hist. of Europe, c. xli. § 24.

39. Which arose from the repeal of so many indirect taxes.

It is easy to see to what this great change, fraught with such vast and irreparable effects upon the future destinies and ultimate fate of the British empire, has been, in the first instance, owing. It arose from the repeal of so large a portion of the indirect taxes, which, according to Mr Pitt's policy, were to have been kept as a sacred resource, never to be trenched upon, so far as they were necessary to provide for the Sinking Fund. The direct taxes, universally felt as so oppressive, were never intended by him to be prolonged beyond the termination of the war. To such an extent has this system of abandoning the indirect taxes, the sole support of the Sinking Fund, been carried by successive administrations, all bidding against each other in the race for popularity,

* Unredeemed debt in 1815, . . . £816,311,940
Ditto in 1830, . . . . 757,486,997

Paid off in fifteen years—funded debt, . £58,724,943
—PORTER'S *Parliamentary Tables*, i. 6.

Unfunded debt in 1815, . . . £48,725,359
Ditto in 1830, . . . . 32,079,483

Paid off in fifteen years—unfunded debt, . £16,642,876
—*Ann. Reg.*, 1816, 485, and 1830, 273. *App. to Chron.*

PAID OFF IN FIFTEEN YEARS.

Funded debt, . . . . . £58,724,943
Unfunded, . . . . . 16,642,876

Total, . . . . . £75,367,719

that these repeals amounted, between 1815 and 1830, to £17,507,356, * clear indirect taxes remitted, after taking into view what had been imposed during the same period. It was impossible that so vast a reduction, coinciding with the additional remission of £15,000,000 direct property-tax during the same period, could take place without altogether extinguishing the Sinking Fund, which was based entirely upon those indirect taxes, and thereby inflicting a fatal and irrecoverable wound upon the whole financial system of the nation.

40. Which was occasioned by the contraction of the currency.

It is the more surprising that this great reduction of indirect taxes should have been carried through by every successive administration which succeeded to the helm of affairs, when it is recollected that the Government shared to the very full in the embarrassment so strongly felt in the country. There was no farmer, manufacturer, or weaver more embarrassed for money, in proportion to their resources, than the Treasury was during the greater part of this period. There must obviously have been

* INDIRECT TAXES REPEALED AND LAID ON, FROM 1816 TO 1830, BOTH INCLUSIVE, VIZ. :—

| Years. | Taken off. | Laid on. |
|---|---|---|
| 1816, | £2,863,000 | £375,058 |
| 1817, | 36,495 | 7,991 |
| 1818, | 9,504 | 1,356 |
| 1819, | 269,484 | 3,102,302 |
| 1820, | 4,000 | 119,602 |
| 1821, | 471,309 | 44,842 |
| 1822, | 2,139,101 | ... |
| 1823, | 4,185,735 | 18,596 |
| 1824, | 1,801,333 | 49,605 |
| 1825, | 3,676,239 | 48,100 |
| 1826, | 1,697,215 | 188,725 |
| 1827, | 84,038 | 21,402 |
| 1828, | 51,998 | 1,966 |
| 1829, | 126,406 | ... |
| 1830, | 4,070,742 | ... |
| | £21,486,599 | £3,979,243 |
| | 3,979,243 | |
| Balance of indirect taxes remitted from 1815 to 1830, | £17,507,356 | |

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, 485-486, 3d edition.

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some great cause constantly in operation from 1815 to 1830, which prompted a course so much at variance with the present interests of Government, and fraught with such danger to the ultimate financial prospects of the country. Nor is it difficult to see what this cause was. The threatened resumption of cash payments by the Bank in 1816, the completed resumption in 1819, the suppression of small notes by the bill of 1826, did the whole. They created an overbearing necessity which nothing could withstand. Prices having been lowered above 50 per cent by these measures, and at least £150,000,000 annually cut off—save in 1818, 1824, and 1825 when the currency was expanded—from the remuneration of industry throughout the country, while debts and money obligations remained the same, it was impossible to maintain the former indirect taxes any more than the direct ones. Diminution of burdens became a state necessity to which everything, even the ultimate existence of the nation, required to yield. The taxes remitted, indeed, were little compared to the remuneration of industry cut off, but still they were something, and their remission at least removed the bitterest ingredient in the cup of misery, that of having its sufferings disregarded.

41. Which also produced the cry for Reform.

It soon appeared, however, that the destruction of the Sinking Fund was not to be the only effect produced by the contraction of the currency, and its being based entirely on gold, which by no possibility could be always retained. The sufferings of the industrial classes also made themselves known in a still more audible manner; and with the disappearance of small notes from the circulation in England, commenced the CRY FOR REFORM, which soon came to supersede all other cries, and produced such a ferment in the country as changed, first the administration, and then the constitution. The people, engaged in industrial pursuits, were so universally involved in distress that they would bear it no longer. They had petitioned the legislature for inquiry and relief, over and

over again, during the last fifteen years, and these petitions had uniformly been rejected. Cities equally with counties, manufacturers alike with farmers, shopkeepers with squires, had earnestly implored relief, and offered to substantiate their distresses by evidence; but their prayers had been disregarded. They were told that they were altogether mistaken, that they were eminently prosperous, and that the cutting off of £150,000,000 annually from the remuneration of productive industry in the State had occasioned no diminution in its ability to bear the existing and undiminished burdens. Capital, intrenched in the close boroughs, which it had acquired by purchase, was more than a match for the industrial classes, still, under the existing constitution of the House of Commons, in a minority; and, finding itself increased by a half by the existing system, derided the impotent efforts of labouring industry. Like the farmers-general of the revenue in France, who made colossal fortunes out of the labour of the people anterior to the Revolution, they said, "Pourquoi tant de bruit? *nous sommes si bien.*" Worse even than that, the influence of the capitalists had become such that they had succeeded not only in stifling the cry of distress, but in blinding men to its real cause, and, by their influence over the press, had withdrawn the public attention from the only change by which the general suffering could be alleviated.

42. Disinclination of the Whigs generally to parliamentary reform.

These causes produced that general and blind cry for change, which ere long acquired such force as to be irresistible. The Whig leaders, who were the proprietors of a large part of the close boroughs, and by means of them had governed the country for eighty years after the Revolution, were in no hurry to forward their extinction; and although this obliged them, in order to keep up their credit with the people, to join, on some occasions, in the outcry against the corruptions of Parliament, yet in secret they were not less inclined than their opponents to uphold them. "In this," says the historian of their party, "there is nothing to be wondered at. All the

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great families had almost entirely receded from the ranks of the reformers; and they looked with jealousy upon all who based their pretensions to popular favour upon views of parliamentary reform. In 1819, they made the most bitter invectives against the reformers; and when the Whigs, under Mr Canning, became themselves part of the Government, their wishes for reform appear to have entirely disappeared."[1]* The Canning party, both before and after the death of its leader, was still more strongly, and on principle, opposed to any general reform.† But although these two great sections of the liberal party, the Whigs and Canningites, were thus strongly opposed to the very last to any sweeping plan of parliamentary reform, yet the general and long-continued distress consequent on the contraction of the currency,[2] from 1819 to 1830, obliged them to alter their tone, and, in order to preserve their lead with the people, give in to the

[1] Roebuck, History of the Whigs, i. 205, 206.

[2] Roebuck, i. 210, 212; Ann. Reg. 1830, 87, 94.

* "Mr Tierney declared that he never rose with more of the spirit of moderation, or with more a disposition to harmony, than he felt at that moment; and in the first place, he must thank his noble friend (Lord John Russell) for the opportunity which he had afforded the House of *unanimously and decidedly* discountenancing the *wild and visionary doctrines of reform* which had lately agitated the country." Lord John Russell said, on July 1, 1819, "I agree in the propriety of disfranchising such boroughs as are notoriously corrupt, and I will give my consent to any measure that will limit the duration of Parliament to three years. I cannot, however, pledge myself to support a measure that goes the length of proposing an inquiry into the general state of the representation, because such an inquiry is calculated *to throw a slur upon the representation of the country*, and to fill the minds of the people with vague and indefinite alarm."—*Parl. Deb.* xli. p. 1106, and xl. p. 1440.

† "Now, what remains behind?" said Mr Huskisson, in 1829—"Parliamentary reform. I trust it will long remain behind. I hope we shall *always resist it firmly and strenuously*. I am sure, if we adopt the proposition of my honourable friend the member for Blitchingly [for giving the members for East Retford to Birmingham], the chance of our making a successful resistance to parliamentary reform will be increased; but if we adopt the proposition of the honourable member for Hertford [for giving the franchise to the Hundred], we shall see parliamentary reform, backed by a powerful auxiliary out of the House (I mean public opinion), made an annual and formidable subject of discussion."—*Mirror of Parliament*, 1829, p. 1450. "I feel no difficulty," said Lord Howick, in 1830, "in understanding the right honourable gentleman. He has made an admission, for which I thank him. Individuals who think as the right honourable gentleman does, are willing to give up some of the outworks of corruption, in order that they may be better able to defend the stronghold."—*Ibid.*, 1830, p. 127.

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general demand for an entire change in the representation.

43. Various motions on parliamentary reform made in Parliament during the session of 1830.

The first symptoms of this feverish and unconquerable anxiety for change, appeared in a variety of motions on the subject of parliamentary reform, brought forward during the session of 1830 by several detached members, without any apparent concert with each other, but which showed in an unmistakable manner how earnestly the subject was forced upon them by their constituents. Lord Howick, who, like his father Earl Grey, had, almost alone of the aristocratic members of the Whig party, been throughout a decided and consistent reformer, first brought forward a motion "for some general and comprehensive measure, the only means of checking the scandalous abuses which prevail," which was lost by a majority of only 27; the numbers being 126 to 99.[1] On 18th February, the Marquess of Blandford, a leader of the High-Church party, which was so profoundly irritated at Mr Peel and the Duke of Wellington for their conduct on Catholic emancipation, made motion for a vague and very sweeping measure of reform, conceived rather in anger than wisdom, which was negatived by a much larger majority—the numbers being 160 to 57.[2] A much more formidable, because better conceived and reasonable onslaught on the existing state of things, was made by Lord John Russell, who, on 29th February, brought forward a motion for leave to bring in a bill "to enable the towns of Manchester, Leeds, and Birmingham to return representatives to Parliament." Nothing more reasonable could be conceived; for this proposal, laying aside all projects of sweeping reform, went only to provide a remedy in the most moderate way for a great and acknowledged defect, and lessened the danger of future innovation by detaching from it the formidable alliance of present grievance. The motion, accordingly, was supported by the whole strength of the united Whig and Canning parties in addition to the Radical reformers; and the division showed only a

[1] Mirror of Parliament, 1830, 131, 135.

[2] Ibid., 361 *et seq.*, Feb. 23.

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majority of 48, the numbers being 188 to 140.[1] The strength of the Reform party, evinced by this division, induced Mr O'Connell, on 28th May, to bring in a bill, limiting the duration of Parliament to three years, to make suffrage universal, and protect the voters by the ballot. Lord John Russell upon this moved an amendment to the effect, "that it is expedient to extend the basis of the representation of the people in this House, by giving members to large unrepresented towns, and to counties of greatest wealth and population." Mr O'Connell's motion was rejected by a majority of 309, the numbers being 319 to 13; and Lord John Russell's amendment by 96, the numbers being 213 to 117.[2]

[1] Mirror of Parliament, 1830, 376.

[2] Mirror of Parliament, 1830, ii. 2054, 2056; Ann. Reg. 1830, 87, 97.

44. Rise of the political unions, and their great influence.

These different decisions sufficiently proved the progress which, in spite of the disinclination of the leaders of the Whigs and Canningites, the Reform question was, from the pressure from without, making in the House of Commons. But meanwhile a still more efficient ally to the cause was arising, and had already acquired considerable strength in the country. This was the POLITICAL UNIONS, which, in imitation of the Catholic Association, were formed in the principal unrepresented great towns in the empire, and which ere long acquired an influence that came to overbalance for the time that of both Houses of Parliament. They began in Birmingham, the city in the kingdom which had suffered most from the measures pursued by the legislature, in consequence of the immense reduction in the price of hardware goods from the contraction of the currency. Their object was to collect funds, appoint committees, and organise corresponding societies, in order to raise a universal cry for parliamentary reform through the country; and to carry the question in spite of all the opposition which could be made by the holders of the close boroughs, by exaggerating the difficulties and distresses of the country, and representing reform in Parliament as the one and only panacea which would at once terminate all its sufferings.[3] By steadily pursu-

[3] Ann. Reg. 1830, 91, 92.

ing this object, and turning the whole ill-humour of the country arising out of the general distress into this one channel, they hoped to carry their point in spite of all the lukewarmness of the Whig, and the opposition of the whole Tory borough proprietors.

45. Illness and death of George IV. June 26.

Such, however, was the strength of the great capitalists interested in the continuance of the existing order of things, monetary as well as political, that it is doubtful whether these hopes would have been realised, at least without the aid of open violence, or for a long period, had it not been for two events which occurred in rapid succession at this period, and totally disturbed the balance of parties and equilibrium of the national mind in Great Britain. The first of these was the death of the King, which took place on the 26th June, and rendered a dissolution of Parliament in the course of the autumn unavoidable; the second the French Revolution, and fall of Charles X. on July 28th, which caused the new elections to take place during a period when the public mind was excited to the very highest degree by the sight of the overturn of a throne by urban revolt in the neighbouring kingdom. The health of George IV., which had been long precarious, and much impaired by the anxieties and regrets consequent on Catholic emancipation, failed so rapidly in the spring of this year, that on 15th April a bulletin was issued, stating that his Majesty was labouring under a bilious disorder, which was soon ascertained to be in reality an ossification of the heart. So rapid was the progress of this frightful disease, that within six weeks afterwards it became necessary to bring a bill into Parliament, authorising the royal sign-manual to be adhibited by stamp. The malady ran its usual course, exhibiting alternately symptoms of alleviation and aggravation, and at length terminated fatally on 26th June, in the 68th year of the Sovereign's age.[1]

April 15.

May 24.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1830, 131, 132; Roebuck, i. 244, 245.

George IV., who thus paid the debt of nature at one of the most critical periods of English history, is a Sovereign

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who has been so variously represented by political men and writers of opposite parties, that it is scarcely possible to recognise the features of the same individual in the two sets of portraits. The personal friend and cordial ally of the Whig leaders early in life, he became the object of their envenomed and impassioned malice, when in maturer years, after he had succeeded to power, he failed to realise the promises made to, and expectations formed by them, at a former period. By the Tories he was regarded with distrust and suspicion, while he was the companion of Fox, Sheridan, Tierney, the Duchess of Devonshire, and all the constellation of Whig talent; by the Whigs he became the object of the bitterest of all feelings, disappointed hope, when, after he became Regent, he called Lord Liverpool, Lord Castlereagh, and Lord Eldon to his councils. It is easy to see that both parties, at these different times, regarded him with exaggerated feelings; and it is not impossible at this distance of time, when a new generation has succeeded, and different interests have arisen, to see where the truth lies between these conflicting statements.

46. Character of George IV., variously given by opposite parties.

His reign as Regent and as King will always be memorable in English history, for it commenced with the greatest military triumphs recorded in its annals, and it ended with the most important social and political changes which have occurred since the Great Rebellion. Neither the one nor the other, however, can in justice be ascribed to the Sovereign. He succeeded to the unrestricted duties and powers of royalty in June 1812, when Wellington was commencing the Salamanca campaign, and Napoleon was engaging in that of Moscow; and he reaped the harvest prepared by the perseverance and sacrifices of others. He gave a cordial support to his ministers and the nation in bringing the contest to a triumphant close; but there his merit in that respect ended. He departed from life amidst the heart-burnings and irritation consequent on Catholic emancipation, and on the eve of the

47. Great events of his reign.

great change which was to usher in reform; but he had neither merit nor demerit in these great events. He opposed the first as long and strongly as was consistent with his duties as a constitutional monarch, and beyond all question he would have done the same with the last, had his life been prolonged to the period when it came so violently to agitate the nation. His merits or demerits as a sovereign are irrespective, as is often the case with constitutional monarchs, of the great events of his reign.

48. His remarkable talents.

He undoubtedly possessed talents of a very superior kind. They were thus portrayed by two men who knew him well, and whose testimony, independent of their honest character and eminent fame, is rendered the more trustworthy that it was drawn *after* the monarch was no more. "Posterity," said Sir Robert Peel, "will regard his late Majesty as a sovereign who, during war, maintained the honour and the glory of England, and who, during the whole period of his delegated trust, or of his reign as sovereign, never exercised, or wished to exercise, a prerogative of the Crown, except for the advantage of his people. I am not overstepping the bounds of sober truth when I state that his Majesty was an enlightened friend of liberty, that he was an admirable judge, and liberal patron of the fine arts; and I can from my own personal experience assert, that his heart was ever open to any appeal which could be made to his benevolence, and to the saving of human life, or the mitigation of human suffering." "The manners of George IV.," said the Duke of Wellington, "had received a polish, his understanding acquired a degree of cultivation, almost unknown to any individual: on every occasion he displayed a degree of knowledge and of talent not often to be expected of a person holding his high office."[1] This is very high praise, and as such it has excited the indignation of the Liberal historians; but the concurring testimony of all who enjoyed the Sovereign's private society, or even met him on business, attest to its truth. His taste was refined in the

[1] Mirror of Parliament, 1830, 2590, 2642.

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highest degree; his ear for music exquisite; his manners won for him the reputation of being the "first gentleman in Europe," and several of his private holograph letters display a felicity of expression which the most experienced professional writer might envy.*

49. His failings and vices.

Unfortunately his character, like that of most men, was of a very mixed description, and the bad qualities were those of the heart rather than the head. He was as well informed, clear-sighted, and intelligent as the ministers in daily converse with him on business asserted; but he was also as selfish, capricious, and self-willed, as the women admitted to still closer intimacy too fatally experienced. Love is the touchstone not only of the warmth, but of the character of the heart; it does not alter the disposition, but only brings it out; it renders the brave more brave, the generous more generous; but not less certainly the selfish more selfish, the egotistical more egotistical. George IV. was wholly incapable of standing this searching test. Supposing his severance from Queen Caroline to admit of excuse, from what was afterwards proved of the frailties and indiscretions of that ill-starred princess, his conduct on other occasions when he chose for himself, and could not plead the Marriage Act in extenuation, was cold-hearted, perfidious, and deserving of the very highest reprobation. His early amours with "Perdita" probably came to no other end than that which an accomplished courtesan expects and deserves; but the case was very different with a most superior and charming lady, Mrs Fitzherbert, of whose person he obtained possession by going through a fictitious and fraudulent marriage-ceremony, which he afterwards made Mr Fox deny in Parliament. That illustrious man never

* "Your glorious conduct is beyond all human praise, and far above any reward. I know no language in the world worthy to express it. I feel I have nothing left to say but devoutly to offer up my prayer of gratitude to Providence that it has, in its omnipotent bounty, blessed my country and myself with such a general. You have sent me, among the trophies of your unrivalled fame, the staff of a French marshal, and I send you in return that of England." —PRINCE-REGENT *to* Duke of WELLINGTON, 3d July 1813; GURWOOD's *Despatches*, x. 532.

forgave the insult thus offered to his honour; and when he discovered the falsehood of the denial of which he had thus been made the unsuspecting instrument,* he withdrew altogether from an intimacy followed by requisitions so degrading. Of truth, like other systematic voluptuaries, he was in a great degree regardless, at least when it interfered with his pleasures or his passions. Self-willed and capricious throughout, he became, as he advanced in life, faithful only to one desire, the common refuge of such characters—he was mainly governed by the love of ease; and to this object he sacrificed many objects which he even regarded as matters of conscience. He was strongly opposed to Catholic emancipation, and had serious compunctious visitings for having yielded to it; but he had not energy sufficient to face the struggle which would have ensued had he thrown himself on the country, and refused the royal assent; nor, in truth, could such refusal at that period have served any good purpose.[1]

[1] Twiss's Life of Lord Eldon, iii. 124; Roebuck, i. 247, 250.

50. William IV.: his character.

WILLIAM IV., who succeeded on the death of the reigning sovereign, was a prince of a different character from his predecessor. Like him, he has been the object of alternate eulogium and vituperation from the two great parties which divided the State. It was his lot to be called to the throne on the eve of the greatest political revolution which has ever occurred in its history, and he has in consequence shared the fate of all persons involved in similar convulsions—that of being praised by each party as long as he favoured its views, and condemned as soon as he proved himself adverse to it. He was warmly eulogised by Mr Brougham at the outset of his reign,* and the "most popular King since the days of Alfred" was the object of incessant panegyric from the

* "I hope," said Mr Brougham, "that elsewhere there is too much magnanimity, too much patriotism, too much manliness, too much strength of mind, to permit the illustrious Sovereign now upon the throne to shrink from looking in the face that ultimate termination of his earthly existence from which a recent event may show him that princes no more than their subjects are exempt."—*Mirror of Parl.*, 1830, p. 2616. These words were spoken of a *living* sovereign, and therefore more suspicious than Mr Peel's eulogy on a departed one.

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liberal press as long as he went along with their measures. Gradually, however, their eulogies ceased, and at length turned into bitter invective, when he was found endeavouring to oppose the bulwark of the Crown to the threatening surges of democracy. In truth, however, he was not the fit object either of praise or blame on either occasion. On both he was the almost passive instrument of the efforts of others. The national passions were so strongly roused, that had he possessed the eloquence of Mirabeau, the capacity of Cæsar, or the energy of Napoleon, he would have failed in any attempt either to direct or oppose them.

51. And failings.

His abilities were respectable, but not remarkable—by no means equal to those of George IV., which were, so far as natural powers go, by much the first of his family. Bred up by his father to the profession of the navy, he had imbibed the kindly feelings and buoyancy of mind so common in that profession, and at the same time shared in the deficiency of general information which the habits of a nautical life are so apt to produce. His conduct on the throne at times appeared inconsistent and capricious, but that did not proceed from any perfidy or duplicity of character, but from the limited range of his intellectual vision, which precluded him from foreseeing in the outset consequences which presented themselves with fearful clearness to him in the end. Brave individually, he was not firm politically; and above all he had a secret vein of vanity which led him to court popular applause, irrespective of the ultimate consequences of the course applauded—a weakness common to him with Necker, Peel, and several other men, who have left the impress of their actions most indelibly engraven on the annals of their country, but perhaps the most dangerous weakness which persons in exalted situations can possess.

He had not the passion for meretricious variety which the Prince of Wales had indulged early in life, but he had formed one lasting *liaison* with a celebrated actress,

Mrs Jordan, by whom he had a numerous family, since ennobled by the title of Earl of Munster. He was in the sixty-fifth year of his age when he ascended the throne, and had been married for several years to the Princess Adelaide of Saxe-Meiningen, who became Queen of England. She was a model of every feminine virtue, and endowed with no small amount of masculine courage and resolution. She had borne him two princes, both of whom died in infancy, and there was no longer any hope of a direct succession to the crown—a subject of regret at the time, but which has long since been forgotten in the virtues and popularity of the illustrious Princess who upon his demise succeeded to the throne.

52. His personal character, and Queen.

The usual expressions of condolence on the demise of the late monarch, and congratulation on the accession of the new, by both Houses, did not long suspend the strife of parties in Parliament; on the contrary, it only became more keen and impassioned; for the death of the former king had removed the personal antipathies which had been one great cause of the long exclusion of the Whigs from power, and the known intimacies and facility of character of the new opened to them a fair prospect of speedily regaining it. The first proceedings in Parliament, accordingly, were marked by a great tenderness of the liberal leaders towards the reigning monarch. They had long suffered from a rupture with the throne, and they were resolved not again to incur a similar difficulty. The Tories were retained in their places by William; but it was well understood that they held them on sufferance only, and that as soon as, by a coalition of parties, they were thrown into a minority in the House of Commons, the Sovereign would without reluctance call the leaders of Opposition to the helm.[1] *

53. Precarious condition of Ministers after the accession of William IV.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1830, 133, 134; Roebuck, i. 256.

* "The Whigs were determined not to have another personal quarrel with the Sovereign, and thus put themselves in a painful position when called to the presence of the Sovereign, and called to act in his name. Whatever might happen, therefore, they were resolved to be on good terms with the King, having experienced the mischief done to their party by their unhappy strife with

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54. Debate on the question of a Regency, in the event of the King's death.

The first question on which the temper of the Liberals to the new Sovereign was evinced was regarding a passage in the Address, in which the Ministers recommended, in answer to a message from the Sovereign, that Parliament should sit till provision was made for carrying on the public service, and then be dissolved. Earl Grey in the Lords, and Lord Althorpe in the Commons, moved for a provision for a Regency, in the event of the demise of the Sovereign in the interval before the new Parliament assembled. The debate was chiefly remarkable for the lavish encomiums bestowed by the Whig chiefs, and especially Mr Brougham, on the new King; but the motion, which was entirely a party move, was unsuccessful in both Houses, being defeated in the Lords by a majority of forty-four, and in the Commons by one of forty-six. These numbers indicated an approximation to equality between the two parties for long unknown in Parliament, and presaged a change in administration at no distant period.[1]

June 30.

[1] Mirror of Parliament, 1830, 2689, 2769.

55. Prosecution of the press, and West India Question.

Two questions occurring during this session of Parliament powerfully contributed to influence the public mind, and increase the unpopularity of Ministers, already prepared by so many concurring causes. The first of these was a debate on certain prosecutions of the press, especially the *Morning Journal*, which had been instituted by Sir James Scarlett, the Attorney-General, for libels against the Government. Instead of adopting the wise course of disregarding such attacks altogether, and replying to them only by integrity and wisdom of administration, it was deemed necessary to proceed against them by *ex-officio* information—a mode of proceeding unpopular at all times, and especially when instituted by a functionary who had himself been one of the warmest

his predecessor. Sir Robert Peel had indulged in panegyric on the late, Mr Brougham employed his powers in eulogising the new Sovereign. Nothing, therefore, was heard but a chorus of praise of the dead and the living."—ROEBUCK, vol. i. p. 256.

supporters of the liberty of the press. Government, at a critical moment, was seriously damaged in public estimation by this injudicious proceeding. The second was a motion brought forward by Mr Brougham, towards the close of the session, on the subject of colonial slavery. His motion was, that "this House do resolve, at the earliest practicable period next session, to take into its serious consideration the state of the slaves in the colonies of Great Britain, in order to the mitigation and final abolition of slavery." The motion was resisted by Government, and thrown out by a majority of 29, the numbers being 56 to 27; but Mr Brougham made a powerful speech on the occasion, which harrowed up the feelings of the humane throughout the country, and procured for him the representation of the West Riding of Yorkshire at the next election. This debate, though conducted in a very thin House, deserves to be noticed as the commencement of that vehement feeling on the subject of slavery in the country, which soon after, for good or for evil, forced on the unconditional measure of NEGRO EMANCIPATION.[1]

July 13.

[1] Mirror of Parliament, 1830, 2681; Brougham's Speeches, ii.132; Ann. Reg. 1830, 137, 141.

56. Prorogation and dissolution of Parliament, and French Revolution.

Parliament was prorogued by the King in person on 23d July, and next day a proclamation for its dissolution appeared, the writs being returnable on 14th September. Never had the country been appealed to under such critical circumstances, or a fortuitous combination of events produced such momentous effects on the British empire. The very day after the proclamation dissolving Parliament appeared in the *London Gazette*, the famous ordinances were signed by Charles X., and the contest began in the streets of Paris which terminated in the overthrow of the French monarchy. Incalculable were the results of this fortuitous, perhaps providential, coincidence. The elections, which began in the end of August or beginning of September, took place during an excitement, in consequence of that event, which never had been paralleled, since the Great Rebellion, in English history.

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All hearts were moved, all minds fired, all sympathies awakened by it. The national mind, grave and sedate on ordinary occasions, was then roused to a pitch almost of frenzy. It is in such characters that the passions, when once thoroughly excited, are ever the strongest and most irresistible. Unbounded was the enthusiasm excited in the whole middle classes, and a large part of the higher, by that great event. The English mind was sympathetic with the cause of freedom all over the world; and warmly interested in the first French Revolution at its outset, and detached from it only by the excitement of the war and its own atrocities, it now lent itself without reserve to the great and comparatively bloodless effort in favour of liberty made in the neighbouring kingdom. The heroism displayed by the citizens during the conflict, the clemency and abstinence from pillage by which the triumph was distinguished, the celerity and completeness of the victory, diffused a universal enchantment. All ranks, though from different motives, joined in it. The ardent and philanthropic beheld with thankfulness a great triumph, almost unstained by human blood, achieved for the arms of freedom; the middle classes were elated by the prospect of a citizen-king being placed on the throne, and their armed representatives in the National Guard disposing of the crown; the press was charmed at the sight of the editors of newspapers becoming ministers of state; the Radicals were in transports at beholding a dynasty overthrown by a well-concerted urban revolt, and a monarch of the people's choice, "surrounded by republican institutions," assuming the reins of government. Fearful of the consequences, and trembling for themselves, the aristocratic leaders and far-seeing of the educated classes kept aloof, and awaited the course of events before they declared decidedly on the subject: but their numbers were too few to weaken the universal transports;[1] and the liberal chiefs, to preserve the lead to which they had been accustomed, were compelled,

[1] Ann. Reg. 1830, 144, 145; Roebuck, i. 291, 296; Martineau, ii. 7, 12.

often in secret against their will, to take the lead in the expression of the general enthusiasm.

This general excitement, which went on daily increasing for some months after the Revolution of 1830 took place, appeared with decisive effect upon the results of the elections. It was not the number of the victories gained by the Liberals so much as their character, which was the decisive thing. Not one cabinet minister obtained a seat by anything like a popular election, while their opponents carried the greatest constituencies without a contest, or by triumphant majorities. Mr Brougham was returned without opposition for the West Riding of Yorkshire. "The squires," said he, "were all against me, but I canvassed the towns and villages, and soon convinced them that resistance was hopeless." Devonshire, after a violent contest, was carried by Lord Ebrington, a decided Whig, and the support of the same party brought in Sir Thomas Acland, a liberal Tory. Middlesex brought in Mr Hume by a large majority, and in Cambridgeshire the old-established influence of the Rutland family was defeated in consequence of the indignation of the freeholders at the duke's vote in favour of the Catholics. These changes in the counties were nearly all owing to the strong opinion of the rural population on that question, and the ulcerated feelings with which they regarded those who, as they thought, had betrayed them. But in the great towns the result was the same, though springing from a general sense of suffering in consequence of the change of prices rather than from religious feelings. Liverpool returned Mr Huskisson and General Gascoigne, both hostile, though on different grounds, to the Government. London, Westminster, Aylesbury, and nearly all the great towns, returned Opposition members. Even Mr Croker lost his seat for Dublin University. In the general result of the election, it was calculated that Ministers had lost fifty seats, making a difference of a hundred on a vote: and the character of the changes was

Result of the elections favourable to the Liberals.

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even more serious than their number; for of the eighty-two county seats for England, only twenty-eight were ministerial; of thirteen great cities only three returned members in that interest; and upon the whole of two hundred and thirty-six seats, more or less open, only seventy-nine were ministerial, while a hundred and forty-one were in decided opposition, and sixteen neutral.[1]

1 Ann. Reg. 1830, 146, 147.

58. Distracted state of Ireland, and entire failure of emancipation to pacify it.

The enthusiasm excited by the French Revolution was no doubt one great cause of this decisive change, especially in the great towns, where it was sedulously fostered in public meetings, headed by Whigs and Liberals of all sorts. But much was also owing to the deep heart-burnings produced in the agricultural districts by the resistance of Government to every petition for relief, and the entire failure of Catholic emancipation to allay any of the disturbances, or alleviate any of the sufferings of Ireland. The English Protestant leaders pointed with triumph on the hustings to the example of that distracted country, as proving what might be expected when men deviated from the faith of their fathers. So far from being pacified, it was daily becoming more disturbed; so far from O'Connell having sunk into a *nisi prius* lawyer, he had become a more formidable chief of agitation than ever. Emancipation had become the platform on which the leaders of the movement planted their whole batteries for the demolition of the Protestant faith, and the severance of the connection with Great Britain. A new Catholic Association was formed under the title of "The Friends of Ireland, of all Religious Denominations," the avowed objects of which were a repeal of the Subletting Act, radical reform in Parliament, and the repeal of the Union.[2]

2 Ann. Reg. 1830, 148.

The Lord-Lieutenant put down this Association by proclamation, upon which Mr O'Connell counselled a general run upon the banks, and formed a new association under the title of "The Anti-Union Association." This, too, was forbidden by the Lord-Lieutenant, upon which O'Connell

summoned it to meet under the significant title of "Association of *Irish Volunteers* for the Repeal of the Union." He told them in the most emphatic terms to look at France and Belgium for examples of what might be done when the people were determined, and enjoined petitions from every county, city, parish, and village in Ireland, for the repeal of the Union, and the severance of all connection between Church and State. This Association, too, was proclaimed down; but meanwhile the object was gained: agitation was kept up, the press daily became more inflamed, the people more excited; and these feelings having been roused to the highest pitch at the time the elections came on, a great number of seats, especially in counties, were lost to the Government, and handed over to the most violent of the repeal agitators. And thus Ministers lost seats in the English counties from the indignation felt at the concession of Catholic emancipation; they lost as many in Ireland, from the ingratitude with which the gift was received.[1] *

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59. Successive efforts of the agitators, and their influence on the elections.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1830, 147, 148.

A melancholy catastrophe, which heralded in vast social changes, diverted for a brief period during this autumn the public attention in Great Britain from the important political revolutions in progress, both abroad and at home. On the 15th September, the Manchester and Liverpool Railway was opened, being the FIRST EVER CONSTRUCTED FOR TRAVELLING in the empire. As such,

60. Opening of the Manchester and Liverpool Railway. Sept. 15.

* During the heat of this controversy in Ireland, Mr O'Connell was challenged for some violent expressions he had used in regard to Sir Henry Hardinge, then Secretary for Ireland. He refused to fight, on the ground of a "vow registered in heaven" never again to shed the blood of man in single combat, in consequence of once having done so before; and certainly no reasonable or honourable man will reproach another with abstaining from the absurdity of adding one crime to another by superadding murder to insult; but those who adopt this course should be careful to observe the *justum moderamen* in their own language, and if they have been casually betrayed into an intemperate expression, immediately to make the proper reparation. Instead of this, O'Connell had no sooner registered his vow in heaven against fighting, than he proceeded to apply the most violent and slanderous expressions to all his opponents on earth. It was then he first used his favourite expression, "base, bloody, and brutal," with regard to the Duke of Wellington and Mr Peel, who had earned for him emancipation. His conduct at this period

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it excited a very great interest, for opinions were much divided as to the success of the attempt; and some of the most eminent scientific characters had confidently predicted that it would prove a failure, or that at all events the carriages, owing to the friction of the wheels on the rails, could never be brought to go *more than ten miles an hour*. The Duke of Wellington, Mr Huskisson, and several persons of the highest distinction, went to Liverpool to be present at the opening, and set out in ten carriages, three on the southern and seven on the northern line, but travelling in the same direction, and nearly abreast. It was deemed an astonishing effort that the carriage which conveyed the Duke went sometimes at the rate of *fifteen miles* an hour![1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1830, 145, 146; Chron.

61. And death of Mr Huskisson.

At Parkside station the carriages stopped, and Mr Huskisson and several of his friends got out. Some of them, with the kind intention of bringing the Duke of Wellington and Mr Huskisson together after their estrangement, led the latter round to that part of the train where the Duke was seated, who, as soon as he saw him, held out his hand to him, which was shaken cordially. At this instant the train containing the other gentlemen set off, coming up past them, and a general cry arose, "Get in, get in!" Mr Holmes, who was with Mr Huskisson, immediately, with great presence of mind, drew himself close up to the Duke's train, the only thing to be done in such a situation, and which insures perfect

is thus commented on by one of the ablest of the liberal annalists: "The correspondence on occasion of this offence to Sir H. Hardinge settles the matter for ever about O'Connell's honour, and the possibility of having dealings with him as between man and man; and it is here referred to as evidence that all parties that afterwards courted him, or allied themselves with him more or less for political purposes, were not entitled to complain when he betrayed, insulted, or reviled them. That any terms should have been held with O'Connell by Government, English public, or gentlemen in or out of Parliament, after his present agitation for repeal, and his published correspondence with Sir H. Hardinge in Oct. 1830, is one of the moral disgraces of our time."—Miss MARTINEAU, ii. 8. These expressions are given as conveying the opinion of a liberal historian of deserved reputation, and of her party on their eminent men, rather than the author's own; for certainly they evince a tendency to slide too much into the very fault which she so justly censures in O'Connell.

safety. Mr Huskisson unfortunately seized hold of one of the doors of the Duke's train, which was struck by a projecting part of the other train in passing, and swung round. This caused Mr Huskisson to swing round also, and he fell on the other railway, so that his right leg was passed over by the engine and instantly crushed. The only words he uttered were—"I have met my death; God forgive me." This unhappily proved too true. He was carried to Eccles, where the best medical advice was obtained, but in vain. He survived only a few hours in great pain, which he bore with unshrinking fortitude. He received the sacrament with Mrs Huskisson, and his last words were—"The country has had the best of me; I trust it will do justice to my public character. I regret not the few years that might have remained to me, except for those dear ones," added he, grasping Mrs Huskisson's hand, "whom I leave behind me." He expired a few minutes after, and was interred, after a public funeral, in the new cemetery at Liverpool on the 24th, amidst the tears of an immense concourse of spectators.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1830, 145, 147; Huskisson's Life, i. 234, 240.

62. Reflections on the railway system, and its rapid growth.

With this mournful catastrophe, and thus baptised in blood, did the railway system arise in England. Rapid beyond all human calculation was the progress which it made, and boundless beyond all human ken are the effects which it has produced. Like most of the discoveries destined to produce great and lasting changes on human affairs, its introduction owed little to science, by which it was distrusted, and its effects did not immediately develop themselves. But ere long they were fully made manifest, and they have now, in a manner, changed the whole face of society in the civilised world. Before the year 1850, no less than eleven hundred and eleven Acts of Parliament had been passed, to form new lines or extend old ones; and the capital authorised to be expended on them amounted to the enormous sum of £348,012,188.[2]

[2] Porter, Prog. of the Nation, 327.

A considerable impulse was given to these undertakings in the years 1834 and 1835, which were distinguished by

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63. Its vast and lasting monetary effects.

great commercial activity; but by far the greater part of the railways were set on foot during the joint-stock mania, which lasted from the beginning of 1845 to the end of 1847, during which the sums authorised to be raised by Acts of Parliament were above £230,000,000.* Not more than £200,000,000 of the whole sums expended on railways has proved productive, or yielded any return whatever; and above £150,000,000 has been absolutely lost in these undertakings, so far as the proprietors or the capital of the nation is concerned. It will appear in the sequel how powerfully this prodigious raising and expenditure of money came to influence the fortunes and destinies of the State; what unbounded prosperity it produced at one time, and what terrible disasters at another; and how the existing monetary system, encouraging speculations at first, and withdrawing the means of completing them at last, landed the nation in a series of difficulties, from which it was only extricated by events in the western and southern hemispheres, so timely and important that they can only be ascribed to Divine interposition.[1]

[1] Porter, 327, 3d edit.

64. And moral and political effects.

But the effects of the railway system have not been confined merely to the industrial and monetary concerns of the nation, great and lasting as these effects have been. It has produced social and political results of the very highest importance, and which, like other things in this world, have been partly salutary and partly pernicious. It has in a great measure destroyed space, and brought the most distant parts of the empire into comparatively close proximity with its great cities and metropolis. In this way it has, to a most surprising degree, equalised the circumstances of the different parts of the country, and

* Viz.—

| | |
|---|---|
| 1845, | £60,824,088 |
| 1846, | 132,096,224 |
| 1847, | 40,397,395 |
| | £233,317,707 |

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, 327, 3d edit.

deprived the immediate neighbourhood of the capital and large towns of the exclusive advantages which they have so long enjoyed. The markets of London are supplied with beef from Aberdeenshire, pork from Ireland, and vegetables and milk from the midland counties of England, as regularly as they used to be from the fields of Surrey or the downs of Sussex. Immense and entirely beneficial have been the effects of this equalisation ; and they have already become most conspicuous in the improved cultivation and extended resources of the distant parts of the empire. Nor have the moral and social effects of the increased facilities of communication been less important, or less conducive to human happiness. By reducing to a third the expense, and to a fourth the time of travelling, they have extended its benefits to a proportionally wider circle, and, in particular, brought them within the reach of the middle class, to whom they were previously almost unknown. A tradesman or mechanic can now make the tour of the British Islands, or even of Europe, in a few weeks, which formerly was never attempted but by the nobility, and accomplished in as many years. Immense has been the effect of this happy facility, alike in dispelling prejudice, refining manners, and improving taste ; and these changes have powerfully reacted upon capital cities. It is from the railway system, and the desires to which it gave rise among a new and wide circle, that the Great Exhibition of London in 1851, the subsequent ones at New York and Paris, and the glorious Crystal Palace at Sydenham, have taken their rise.

65. Political effects of the railway system.

In a political point of view, the effects of the railway system have been not less important. By bringing the distant provinces of our empire, comparatively speaking, into close proximity with the metropolis, it has augmented their intelligence, and in the same proportion increased their political power. The constant intercourse from travelling, the increased facility for the transmission of books and newspapers, the almost instantaneous trans-

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mission of intelligence by the electric telegraph, which soon after followed, have powerfully contributed to equalise the advantages of situation, and give to the provinces a large portion, if not the whole, of the intellectual activity which formerly was peculiar to the metropolis. By enabling troops or police to be sent rapidly from one part of the country to another, it has augmented the efficiency of the central government, and enabled it to provide with fewer men, and at a less cost, both for defence against external enemies, and the maintenance of domestic tranquillity. That worst of all ascendancies in a community, the sway of the mob of the capital over the legislature, from the mere force of proximity of situation, so fatally experienced in Athens, Rome, and Paris, has been in a great measure destroyed. A more striking proof of this cannot be figured than was furnished by the fact, that when the disarmament of the National Guard in Belleville and Montmartre was carried into execution, after the suppression of the great insurrection in July 1848, it was effected by the *National Guards of La Vendée*, brought up by the Orleans railway from that distant and secluded province.

66. Its evils and dangers in the undue sway of the capital.

There is no unmixed good in human affairs. Advantages, how great soever, are invariably attended by corresponding evils. The railway system is no exception to this general rule; on the contrary, it affords one of the most striking illustrations of it. It is the greatest promoter that ever came into operation of the *centralising system;* but it has induced its evils as well as its advantages. As much as it has brought the physical force of the provinces to the support of Government in the capital, has it brought the intellectual influence of the metropolis down to the provinces. The chief talent of the nation being there concentrated, from the objects of ambition, political, literary, or legal, which are presented, the sway of mind in a particular quarter has become well-nigh irresistible. The empire has become a huge metropolis, which

the London press rules with despotic sway. Originality or independence of thought in the provinces is crushed in all save a few intrepid minds, by the overwhelming weight of the capital.

67. Its political effects.

Nor has the material and political influence of great cities been less increased by the change than their intellectual sway. The facility of reaching the metropolis has caused the great and the affluent to transfer nearly all their purchases to London; the attractions of Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, and Glasgow, have drawn the most part of the purchases of the middle classes in the provinces to these great emporiums of wealth and industry. The small towns have dwindled, or become stationary, because they have lost their purchasers; the great ones have swelled into Babylons because they have tripled theirs. Politically speaking, the change has been of incalculable importance. The landed proprietors have ceased to influence the small boroughs, because all their purchases are made in the great ones, or the metropolis. The great manufacturing towns have become the rulers, because it is from them that the employment which feeds the lesser towns flows. The only influence which can be reckoned on as durable is that which gives bread or employment. When it is recollected that three-fifths of the House of Commons consist of the members for boroughs, it may be conceived how important an influence this change has come to have on the balance of parties in the State.

68. Military results of the railway system.

Experience has not yet enabled us to determine what influence the railway system, when generally introduced, is fitted to have on military operations—the attack or defence of nations; for the only great wars which have taken place since its introduction—viz., those in Italy and Hungary in 1849, and Turkey in 1854—took place in countries where it had not been at all, or only partially introduced. It is usually considered as having strengthened the means of defence rather than attack, by facili-

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tating the concentration of troops, which it certainly does, on the menaced point. Yet must this be taken with some limitations; for if it facilitates the concentration of the defending, it in an equal degree aids the accumulation of the attacking force: if it will bring the military strength of all France in three days to the menaced point in Belgium or the Rhine, it will not less certainly bring the whole invading force of Germany in as short a time to the same point. If generally introduced into Russia, it would double the already overgrown military strength of the Czar, by more than halving the distance which his troops have to march, and rendering the translation of them from the Baltic to the Euxine, or from Poland to the Caucasus, the work of a few days only, and of no fatigue or loss to the men.

69. On the whole, it augments the means of defending nations.

Undoubtedly, however, upon the whole, it favours the arms of civilisation in a contest with barbarism; for it requires an effort of skill and expenditure of capital for its general adoption which can only be looked for in a wealthy and enlightened state. If it is equally adopted by two countries in a similar state of civilisation, as France and Germany, and *suffered to exist*, it may cause war to resemble more closely a game at chess, by enabling the players to make the moves at pleasure. But if one, when invaded, has the courage or the patriotic spirit to break up the system, it may give a very great, perhaps a decisive advantage, to the party making the sacrifice; for if the retiring army tears up the railway lines and breaks down the bridges, it retains the advantages of the system to itself, and takes them away from its opponent. In this way it may be rendered an essential element in the defence, and important in maintaining the independence of nations. Probably, to take advantage of it, fortresses will come hereafter to be constructed in the heart rather than the frontiers of kingdoms, in order that an invading enemy may find his own facilities diminish, and the forces

of his adversary increase as he approaches the centre of his power.

Before the great strife of parties began in Parliament, symptoms of discontent, attended with some danger and more alarm, began in some of the agricultural counties. Many of the numerous county petitions, which had been presented on the subject of agricultural distress for some years past, had predicted that, if some measures calculated to afford relief were not adopted, it would be impossible to prevent the working classes from breaking into open acts of violence. This prediction was now too fatally verified. The disturbances began in Kent, from whence they rapidly spread to Surrey, Sussex, Hampshire, Wiltshire, and Buckinghamshire. Night after night new conflagrations were lighted up by bands of incendiaries; corn-stacks, barns, farm-buildings, and live cattle, were indiscriminately consumed. Bolder bands attacked mills and demolished machinery; thrashing-mills were in an especial manner the object of their hostility. During October and November, these acts of incendiarism became so frequent as to excite universal alarm. The first rioters who were seized were treated, from feelings of humanity, with undue lenity by the county magistrates, which, of course, augmented the disorders; and it was not till severe examples were made, by a special commission sent into the disturbed districts, and a large body of military was quartered in them, that they were at length put down. From what came out at the trials, it did not appear that these outrages had been the result of any general political design against the Government, but had rather arisen from great distress among the working classes, stimulated into acts of violence by the example of successful revolution at Paris, and similar acts of Jacobin atrocity in Normandy, where they had been very frequent.[1] The Duke of Richmond stated the truth when he said in Parliament, "I believe a feeling now exists among the

70. Disturbances and incendiarism in the southern counties.

1 Mirror of Parliament, 1830, § 2, p. 9; Ann. Reg. 1830, 149, 150; Martineau, ii. 12.

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labouring classes, that your lordships and the upper classes of society are to be regarded rather as their foes than their friends."

71. King's speech. Nov. 2.

Parliament met on the 26th October; but some days having been consumed in swearing in members, the session was not opened till the 2d November. On that day, the King's speech alluded slightly to the recent overthrow of the elder branch of the house of Bourbon in France, but more specifically to foreign events in Belgium and Portugal. "The elder branch of the house of Bourbon no longer reigns in France; and the Duke of Orleans has been called to the throne by the title of King of the French. Having received from the new sovereign a declaration of his earnest desire to cultivate the good understanding, and maintain inviolate all the engagements with this country, I did not hesitate to continue my diplomatic relations and friendly intercourse with the French court. I have viewed, with deep regret, the state of affairs in the Low Countries. I lament that the enlightened administration of the King of the Netherlands should not have preserved his dominions from revolt; and that the wise and prudent measure of submitting the complaints and desires of his people to an extraordinary meeting of the States-General should have led to no satisfactory result. I am endeavouring, in concert with my allies, to devise such means of restoring tranquillity as may be compatible with the welfare and good government of the Netherlands, and with the future security of other states. I have not yet accredited my ambassador to the court of Lisbon; but the Portuguese government having determined to perform a great act of justice and humanity, by the grant of a general amnesty, I think that the time may shortly arrive when the interests of my subjects will demand a renewal of those relations which have so long subsisted between the two countries.[1] I place, without reserve, at your disposal my interest in the hereditary revenues, and in those funds which may arise from any droits of the

[1] Parl. Deb. i. 2, 3 (new series).

Crown or of the Admiralty, from the West India duties, or from any casual revenue, either in my foreign possessions or in the United Kingdom."

72. Lord Grey's declaration on reform.

These words were of deep and important significance as regarded the policy which the Duke of Wellington's administration was prepared to pursue in reference to the important political changes then taking place, or which had recently occurred on the continent of Europe. But these changes, great as they were, did not form the all-absorbing object of public interest. It was domestic change which was the object of universal desire; it was on reform in Parliament that all hearts were set. Foreign affairs were regarded with interest almost entirely as they bore on this vital question; and, accordingly, on the very first day of the session, the two leaders of the opposite parties, Earl Grey and the Duke of Wellington, delivered their opinions on it in terms which have become memorable in English history. The former said: "We ought to learn wisdom from what is passing before our eyes; and when the spirit of liberty is breaking out all around, it is our first duty to secure our own institutions, by introducing into them a temperate reform. I have been a reformer all my life, and on no occasion have I been inclined to go further than I am prepared to go now, if an opportunity were to offer. But I do not found the title to demand it on abstract right. We are told that every man who pays taxes—nay, that every man arrived at the years of discretion—has right to a vote for representatives. That right I utterly deny. The right of the people is to have good government, one that is calculated to secure their privileges and happiness; and if that is incompatible with universal or very general suffrage, then the limitation, and not the extension, is the true right of the people."[1]

[1] Mirror of Parliament, § ii. p. 13; Ann. Reg. 1830, 153, 154.

The Duke of Wellington answered, in words which have become memorable from the revolution in the constitution which they undoubtedly contributed, if not to

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73. Duke of Wellington's famous speech against any reform.

create, at least to accelerate: "The noble earl (Grey) has recommended us not only to put down these disturbances, but to put the country in a state to meet and overcome the dangers which are likely to arise from the late transactions in France, by the adoption of something like parliamentary reform. The noble earl has stated that he is not prepared himself to come forward with any measure of the kind; and I will tell him further, neither is the Government. Nay, I will go further, and say that I have not heard of any measure, up to this moment, which could in any way satisfy my mind, or by which the state of the representation could be improved, or placed on a footing more satisfactory to the people of this country than it now is. I will say that I am thoroughly convinced that England possesses at this moment a legislature which answers all the good purposes of a legislature, in a higher degree than any scheme of government whatever has ever been found to do in any country in the world; that it possesses the confidence of the country; that it deservedly possesses that confidence; and that its decisions have justly the greatest weight and influence with the people. Nay, I will go yet further, and say that if, at this moment, I had to form a legislature for any country, particularly for one like this, in the possession of great property of various descriptions, although, perhaps, I should not form one precisely such as we have, I would endeavour to produce something which should give the same result—viz., a representation of the people, containing a large body of the property of the country, and in which the great landed proprietors have a preponderating influence. Farther still, I beg to state, that not only is the Government not prepared to bring forward any measure of this description, but, in so far as I am concerned, while I have the honour to hold the situation which I now do among his Majesty's councillors, I shall always feel it my duty to oppose any such measures when brought forward by others."[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1830, 155; Mirror of Parliament, 1830, § ii. p. 18; Parl. Deb. i. 52, (new series.)

74. Immense effect produced by this declaration.

Such was the Duke of Wellington's famous declaration against reform, which immediately blew up the smouldering elements of innovation in the nation into a flame. No words from any statesman in English history produced such an impression. The transports became universal: all ranks were involved in it; all heads, save a few of the strongest and most far-seeing, swept away by it. Nearly all classes, though from different motives, had concurred in desiring reform, and with the characteristic dogged resolution of the English character, all, now that it was refused, resolved to have it. The High-Church party wished to raise a barrier against the Roman Catholics, against whom experience had shown the existing constitution afforded no sufficient security; the old Tories desired reform, because it would, as they hoped, restore the influence of landed property in the legislature, and open the doors of Parliament to the petitions for agricultural relief; the Radicals longed for it, as a stepping-stone for themselves to supreme power; the great towns were unanimous for it, as conferring upon them their just share in the government of the country. The Whigs in secret were, for the most part, adverse to the change, as likely to undermine the influence by which they had, for a century after the Revolution, governed the country; but the current of public opinion was so strong that they, as popular leaders, were obliged to go along with it, and in public stand forth as the chief promoters of the desired change. The only considerable body in the State who steadily opposed reform in the abstract were the holders of the close boroughs, and the members whom they had introduced into Parliament; but their numbers were too inconsiderable to form any counterpoise to the formidable phalanx arrayed on the other side; and such as they were, their numbers had been lessened to an unprecedented extent by the result of the last elections, conducted under the pressure of internal distress, and the fervour of the French Revolution.

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75. Mr Brougham's plan of reform.

This strange, and, in English history, unprecedented combination of parties in favour of reform, appeared on the very first night of the session in the House of Commons. There was no division on the Address; but in the course of the debate on it, Mr Brougham gave notice of a motion on the subject on the 16th November. He said "he had been described by one party as intending to bring forward a very limited, and therefore a very useless and insignificant plan; by another he was said to be the friend of a radical, sweeping, and innovating, and I may add—for I conscientiously believe it would prove so—a revolutionary reform. Both these schemes I disavow. I stand on the ancient ways of the constitution. To explain at this moment what I mean by that, would be inconvenient, indeed impossible; but my object in bringing forward this question is not revolution, but restoration; to repair the constitution, not to pull it down." From the manner in which this announcement was received by the old Tories, it was evident that a most formidable coalition of parties was likely to take place upon it.* "I

* Mr Brougham's plan of reform, which was laid before his party on 13th November, was as follows—a curious commentary on his assertion, that he "was determined to stand on the ancient ways of the constitution."

1. All copyholders and landholders to have votes.

2. *All householders also to have votes*, regardless of the rent or value of the house.

3. The great towns, such as Manchester, Glasgow, Leeds, Sheffield, and others, to have members.

4. All the rotten boroughs to be deprived each of half their present members, leaving at least one member to each.

5. All out-voters in *towns* to be disfranchised, but they still to have votes in counties.

6. Freemen to vote, if resident in the borough for six months.

7. Elections in all cases to be concluded in one day.

8. The House to be of five hundred members; Ireland in that event to have eighty members, Scotland forty-five.—BROUGHAM'S MS., *given in* ROEBUCK, vol. i. pp. 420, 421.

This is what Mr Brougham called *Stare super antiquas vias.* His panegyrist Mr Roebuck more correctly designated it when he said, "By this scheme the whole *character* of the House of Commons would have been changed."—ROEBUCK, i. 421. Undoubtedly it would have been so. Household suffrage in the boroughs—that is, in three-fifths of the House—was "the class government of the labouring classes;" that is, revolution. The £10 clause in the Reform Bill avoided this danger, but only by running the nation into another, viz. the class government of shopkeepers, under which we have since lived.

must be allowed," said Lord Winchelsea, who represented that body, "to say, that if the assertion of the noble Duke (Wellington), made on a former night relative to parliamentary reform, was framed with a view of conciliating and gaining the support of the noble and high-minded persons with whom he had been usually united, I can tell the noble Duke he might as well attempt to take high heaven by storm. These are times of danger and peril, in which we require to see efficient men at the head of the Government of the country. Now we see the consequence of having not long given up a great question, not upon the ground of justice or equity, but upon the ground of fear. So far from creating confidence, the yielding up of that question has created a feeling of distrust in the minds of the people. They no longer rely on the Government to afford them redress, or to mitigate their sufferings; they know that Ministers will grant nothing but upon compulsion. I am one of those who feel the necessity of having competent men at the head of the administration in the present situation of the country; and I feel bound to say, that those who compose the higher branches of his Majesty's government at this moment, are not, in my opinion, worthy of the confidence of the people in this hour of imminent peril." [1]

[1] Mirror of Parliament, 1830, § ii. p. 81.

76. Postponement of the King's visit to the City. Nov. 9.

When such was the language of the most steady and consistent supporters of Government in former times, it was evident that its overthrow was only a question of time; and the whole attention of parties, and of the country, was fixed on the question, on what point the decisive division was to take place. A fortuitous event, however, accelerated the catastrophe somewhat sooner than was expected. It had been an ancient custom for the monarchs of England to partake, soon after their accession to the throne, of the splendid hospitality of the City of London; and on this occasion the day was fixed for the 9th November, being the one on which the lord mayor elect came into office. Magnificent preparations had been made for the monarch's

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reception, and all London was in anxious expectation of the splendid procession, when, on the evening of the 7th, the lord mayor received a note from the Home Secretary, stating that, in consequence of information recently received, there was reason to apprehend that, notwithstanding the devoted loyalty of the citizens of London, advantage would be taken of the nocturnal assemblage to create tumult and confusion, and endanger the lives of the people. The truth was, that the new police, which has proved so great a blessing to the metropolis, had lately come into operation; and the thieves and vagabonds of London, perceiving the difference between its energetic bands and the drowsy old watchmen who had preceded it, had been indefatigable in their endeavours to get up a tumult to overthrow it, and fixed on the day of the King's entry of the City for the execution of their design. Thousands of hand-bills had been printed and circulated, calling on the people to come armed on the occasion;* and in addition to the contemplated riot in the streets, it was intended to attack the Duke of Wellington's house while the police were absent in other quarters, in order to give a political colour to the disturbance.[1]

1 Ann. Reg. 1830, 158, 159; Roebuck, i. 412, 413.

77. General consternation on the occasion.

Immense was the effect of this announcement upon the already excited minds of the metropolis. The most alarming reports were immediately in circulation, that a vast conspiracy had been discovered; that we were on the edge of a terrible convulsion; that the Revolt of the Barricades was to be re-enacted that very day in the streets of London. The citizens looked to the bolts and bars of their doors; the more courageous laid in arms, and pre-

* "To arms! Liberty or death!

"London meets on Tuesday next; an opportunity not to be lost for revenging the wrongs we have suffered so long. *Come armed;* be firm, and victory must be ours.—AN ENGLISHMAN." "Englishmen, Britons, and honest men! the time has at length arrived, and all London meets on Tuesday. Come armed; we assure you, from ocular demonstration, six thousand cutlasses have been removed from the Tower for the immediate use of Peel's bloody gang. Remember the cursed speech from the throne. These damned police are to be armed. Englishmen, will you put up with this?"—*Ann. Reg.* pp. 159, 160.

pared for resistance: the shutters were lined with iron plates, and iron blinds were hastily run up. Such was the general consternation that in two hours the Funds fell 3½ per cent. Before the end of the week the panic had subsided, when it was seen that no outbreak took place, and that the excessive alarm had been in a great measure unfounded. But with that reaction commenced a new set of feelings still more damaging to the Government. Ashamed of their own fears, and of the ridiculous length to which they had been carried, the citizens were fain to throw the responsibility for them upon the Ministers; and those who had a few days before been loudest in the exaggeration of the danger, were now foremost in proclaiming its entire groundlessness, and the culpable timidity of the Government which had yielded to such unfounded alarms.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1830, 160, 161; Martineau, ii. 18; Roebuck, i. 415, 416.

78. Speech of Mr Brougham on the occasion.

The liberal chiefs in Parliament made a skilful use of the consternation produced by this event. "I regret much," said Mr Brougham, "the appearance of the letter of this morning. I regret it on account of the mischief which it is certain to cause in the mercantile world, and still more from the connection which it has with the fatal speech from the throne, and the still more fatal speech of the Duke of Wellington against every species of reform—a declaration to which I conscientiously believe he owes nine-tenths of his present unpopularity. I wish that that declaration had not been made. I wish also that I had not lived to see the day when a forgetfulness of the invaluable services in the field, which have won for the Duke of Wellington, as a soldier, a general, and a conqueror, a great, brilliant, and imperishable renown, coupled with a deviation by the noble Duke from his proper sphere into the labyrinth of politics,—I wish to heaven I had not lived to see the day when the forgetfulness of the people of the merits of the soldier, and the forgetfulness of the soldier of his own proper sphere of greatness, display to England, to Europe, and to the world,[2] that he cannot

[2] Ann. Reg. 1830, 161, 162; Parl. Deb. i. 74, 75, (new series).

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accompany his Majesty on his journey into the hearts of an attached and loyal population."

79. Division on the Civil List leaves Ministers in a minority. Nov. 15.

It was now evident to all the world that the downfall of the Wellington Ministry was at hand, and the only question was on what point they should make their election to be beaten. Three important questions stood for early discussion—the Civil List, Parliamentary Reform, and Negro Slavery—of the two last of which notices of motion had been given by Mr Brougham, and the former stood for the 16th of November. Ministers, with great propriety, resolved to retire on the first, on which they foresaw they would be beaten, because, by so doing, they avoided implicating the Crown or themselves upon the all-important national questions which remained behind. The debate came on upon the 15th November, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer moved in common form that the House do resolve itself into a committee on the Civil List, whereupon Sir Henry Parnell moved as an amendment, "that a select committee be appointed to take into consideration the estimates and accounts printed by command of his Majesty regarding the Civil List." The debate was a very short one, but it was distinguished by one significant circumstance. Three old Tories—Mr Bankes, Mr Wynn, and Mr Holme Sumner—spoke in favour of Sir H. Parnell's motion, and against the Government. On a division there appeared 233 for the amendment, and 204 against it, giving a majority of TWENTY-NINE against Ministers. Mr Hobhouse immediately asked Sir Robert Peel * whether Ministers intended to retain office after this expression of the sentiments of the House, to which he properly declined to give any answer at the time; but the next day the Duke of Wellington announced in the House of Lords, and Sir Robert Peel in the House of Commons, that they held office only till their successors were appointed.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1830, 162, 163; Roebuck, i. 429, 430; Martineau, ii. 19; Parl. Deb. i. 87, 88, (new series).

* He had lately succeeded to the baronetcy on the death of his father, at the reverend age of eighty.

# CHAPTER XXIII.

## DOMESTIC HISTORY OF ENGLAND FROM THE FALL OF THE WELLINGTON ADMINISTRATION IN 1829, TO THE PASSING OF THE REFORM BILL IN 1832.



1830.

1. Reflections on the fall of the Wellington Ministry.

THUS fell the Wellington Administration, the most important event in the domestic history of England since the Revolution, in the general annals of Europe since the battle of Waterloo. In the decisive and lasting transference by the political power in the State by which it was followed to another party, it bears a very close resemblance to the overthrow of the Coalition Ministry by Mr Pitt in 1784, which terminated a dominion of nearly a century by the Whigs, and introduced one of half the time by the Tories. But in its political and social results it was far more important than Mr Pitt's triumph. It induced a transference not merely of the reins of government from one party to another, but of political power from one class in society to another. It terminated the long-established dominion of the landed and commercial aristocracy, and vested it in the class of shopkeepers and small householders. It closed the sway of the interests of production, whether in land or manufactures, and created that of buying and selling. Thence has ensued an entire change in our whole domestic policy, both in relation to agriculture and manufactures, and the adoption of a series of measures calculated, by cheapening everything, to benefit consumers and the holders of realised capital, without any

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regard to their influence on those engaged in the work of production. Thence also have arisen changes in our foreign policy equally startling and unexpected. It has displaced Great Britain from the head of Conservative alliances, and placed her in the front rank of the coalitions founded upon movement; and, stifling the ancient animosity of France and England, has brought the legions of both nations in cordial amity and generous rivalry to combat the forces of the Czar, in defence of Turkey, on the shores of the Crimea.

2. Causes which rendered the change so decisive.

Superficial observers, and those whose attention is exclusively fixed on the influence of individual agency in human affairs, see in these vast events and this entire change of system, both foreign and domestic, the effect only of the capacity of the leaders and their dexterity in the management of parties; and they declaim against the mistakes which, as they conceive, have ruined ancient interests, and the tergiversations which have broken up old alliances. But without disputing the important effect of individual men in moulding the fate of nations, it may with safety be asserted that, in this instance, the great change which took place was owing to general causes. The Wellington Administration, and with it the old system of government in Great Britain, fell, because it had become unsuited to the altered circumstances of the people; it neither met their wishes, nor provided for their necessities.

3. Continued.

The very errors, as they were deemed by many at the time, were themselves forced upon their authors by general and irresistible causes. It is easy to see now, on the retrospect, that it was the monetary measures of 1819 and 1826, coupled with the emancipation of the Catholics, which brought about the change, because it was these which spread discontent and division among the rural and industrious classes, who had heretofore been the firmest supporters of the throne, the steadiest friends of the constitution. But that only removes the difficulty a

step farther back. The question remains, What caused these measures to be adopted by successive governments, in opposition alike to the interests of the whole industrious classes of the people and their religious feelings, and in direct antagonism to the policy pursued for a century and a half by the Government, and under which the country had risen to an unexampled height of prosperity and glory? It is evident to any one who attentively considers the progress of these changes that they were not forced upon the legislature by individual men, but forced upon individual men by the legislature; and that a fixed majority had got into the House of Commons, which rendered it impossible to carry on the government in any other way. Each successive administration since the peace had been compelled to relinquish, as the price of retaining office, a part of the old system, until none remained, and an entire change of government and of the constitution had become unavoidable.

4. What had set these causes in motion?

It is not difficult to see, at this distance of time, what was the cause which rendered this change of system necessary; and what is very remarkable, and perhaps unprecedented in human affairs, that cause is to be found in the natural consequences of the entire success of the opposite system. So amazingly had the whole industrial interests of the community—landed, manufacturing, commercial, and colonial—grown and prospered under the old protective system, under which they had all found shelter during an hundred and fifty years, that a new interest had arisen in society, the fruit of their prosperity, but which was destined to limit and restrain it. This was the interest of REALISED CAPITAL, the produce of long-protected and thriving industry, but which had at length, from the unexampled impulse and successes of the war, acquired an influence which enabled it to set all other interests at defiance. This interest, by the command of ready money, and the acquisition of the close boroughs, had succeeded in acquiring a majority in the House of

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Commons, and with it the entire government of the State. Its interests were no longer identical with those of the industry from which it had sprung; on the contrary, they were adverse to it. To sell dear is the interest of the creators of wealth; to buy cheap is the interest of its inheritors. It is in the nature of things that Sir R. Peel the father, who made the fortune, should be the supporter of the protective; Sir R. Peel the son, who succeeded to it, the advocate of the cheapening system. Thence the change of system in the legislature when the inheritors became the more powerful body; and thence the creation of a general discontent in the industrious classes, which at length overwhelmed at once the Ministry and the previous system of government. When once capital, for its own advantage, had rendered the currency of the country entirely dependent on the retention of gold, and introduced free trade into the principal branches of manufacture, a revolution in the whole frame and system of government had become inevitable, and it was merely a question of time when it was to take place.

5. What made the Duke's declaration against Reform so important.

It was this circumstance which rendered the Duke of Wellington's famous declaration against reform so very influential in inducing the immediate downfall of his administration. It announced the determination of Government at all hazards to maintain the existing system in the House of Commons. But that was the precise thing which the country desired to have altered, because it had been the cause of all the suffering which had been experienced. It was against the "borough-mongers," as they were called, that the outcry was directed, because they brought in the men who had pursued the system which had been attended with such disastrous results. There was no hostility against the Crown; little, comparatively speaking, against the House of Lords, except in so far as it influenced the House of Commons. It was the venal and nomination boroughs which were the object of the general indignation, and they were so because the

persons who got into Parliament through their seats had first, by the measures they pursued for the advantage of capital, created the distress, and then shown themselves insensible to all petitions for its relief. When the Duke of Wellington, therefore, declared himself decidedly opposed to every species of reform, he not only thwarted a vehement national passion, but expressed his determination to uphold what was the source of all the suffering which was experienced, and continue the close boroughs, which had become a great national grievance. It is no wonder that it accelerated his fall.

6. The difficulty in forming the new Ministry fixes Mr Brougham's claims.

Earl Grey, as a matter of course, was sent for by the King to form the new Ministry, which it was easy to foresee would be composed chiefly, if not entirely, of the leaders of the liberal party in the two Houses of Parliament. No small embarrassment, however, was experienced in forming the administration, chiefly in consequence of the difficulty of finding a suitable situation for Mr Brougham, whose great abilities, and position as the real if not the avowed leader of the liberal party in the House of Commons, gave him claims to a higher situation than the aristocratic Whigs were willing to allow to any man who had raised himself by the unaided force of his own abilities, without patrician connections or support. On the other hand, it was very material to take the question of reform, which had only been postponed to the 25th November, out of the hands of a man at once so powerful, and so little inclined to follow the dictates or counsel of any other person. So strongly was Mr Brougham himself impressed with these difficulties, that in postponing his motion for reform, which he stated he did with great reluctance, he said, "No change that can take place in the Administration can by possibility affect me." Earl Grey first proposed for him the situation of Master of the Rolls, which is permanent, and is consistent with a seat in the House of Commons, but to this the King peremptorily objected. The Attorney-General's gown was

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next offered to him, but at once rejected. At length, on the King's suggestion, it was agreed to offer him the Great Seals, which were immediately accepted. No further difficulty was experienced in making up the Administration, which was composed almost entirely of *noblemen* of the Whig party. The Duke of Richmond, as representing the ultra-Tories, was made Postmaster-General, with a seat in the Cabinet; a negotiation was opened with Sir Edward Knatchbull, the leader of the same party in the House of Commons, but it failed of success. The new Ministry was officially announced on the 21st November, and gave very general satisfaction to the country.* It is remarkable that in a Liberal Cabinet of fifteen members thirteen were peers, or sons of peers, one a baronet, and *only one* commoner.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1830, 163, 165; Roebuck, i. 434, 450; Martineau, ii. 21, 22.

7. Character of Earl Grey.

EARL GREY, who at this eventful crisis succeeded to the government of the country, has left a name which never will be forgotten in English history, for he introduced that change in the constitution which has been attended with such great and lasting effects. He was beyond all doubt a most remarkable man. Gifted by

* The new Ministry stood as follows:—

*In the Cabinet.*—First Lord of the Treasury, Earl Grey; Lord-Chancellor, Lord Brougham; Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the Commons, Lord Althorpe; President of the Council, Marquess of Lansdowne; Lord Privy Seal, Earl of Durham; Home Secretary, Lord Melbourne; Foreign Affairs, Lord Palmerston; Secretary of Colonies, Lord Goderich; First Lord of the Admiralty, Sir James Graham; President of the Board of Control, Mr Chas. Grant; Postmaster-General, Duke of Richmond; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Lord Holland; without office, Lord Carlisle.

*Not in the Cabinet.*—President of the Board of Trade, Lord Auckland; Secretary-at-War, Mr C. W. W. Wynn; Master-General of Ordnance, Sir James Kempt; Lord Chamberlain, Duke of Devonshire; Lord Steward, Marquess Wellesley; Master of the Horse, Lord Albemarle; Groom of the Stole, Marquess of Winchester; First Commissioner of Land Revenue, Mr Agar Ellis; Treasurer of the Navy, Mr Poulett Thomson; Attorney-General, Sir T. Denman; Solicitor-General, Sir W. Horne.

*In Ireland.*—Lord-Lieutenant, Marquess of Anglesea; Lord-Chancellor, Lord Plunkett; Commander of the Forces, Sir John Byng; Chief Secretary, Lord Stanley; Attorney-General, Mr Pennefather; Solicitor-General, Mr Crompton.

*In Scotland.*—Lord-Advocate, F. Jeffrey, Esq.; Solicitor-General, H. Cockburn, Esq.—*Ann. Reg.* 1830, pp. 164, 165; ROEBUCK, vol. i. pp. 450, 451.

nature with talents of a very high order, he possessed, at the same time, that quality of still rarer occurrence, but which, when it does exist, seldom fails to lead to early shipwreck or ultimate greatness—moral courage, and invincible determination. His political life was consistency itself. He shared with his party their early hostility to the French war, and must bear with them the obloquy, in the eyes of posterity, of having defended the French Revolution long after its atrocities had discredited it in the eyes of all impartial men, and resisted the contest with it when it had become apparent that it was waged by this country for the liberty and independence of mankind. But this was the result of the firmness and consistency of his character, which, having once embraced an opinion, adhered to it for good or for evil through all the mutations of fortune. On the subject of reform he was the same throughout. Unlike the greater part of the Whig aristocracy, who supported it in public, and in secret deprecated it as the most dangerous innovation alike to the country and themselves, he was its advocate from his first entrance into public life; and the plan of reform which he brought forward in the House of Commons, without success, in 1797, differed in no material degree from that which he brought to a triumphant issue in 1832.[1]

[1] See Hist. of Europe, c. xxii. § 9.

8. His character as an orator, and in private.

As a public speaker he must be assigned a very high place—second, perhaps, only to Pitt and Fox in the Augustan age of English oratory. He had not the power of lucid exposition of the former, nor the impetuous flow of the latter, but in condensed expression, cogent argument, and sarcastic power, he was equal to either. He had not the poetic fancy or playful expression of Canning, but he was more thoroughly, and at all times, in earnest—the great secret for moving and permanently ruling the hearts of men. His well-known philippic against that celebrated orator, when he succeeded to power in April 1827, is deservedly placed amongst the most brilliant specimens of rhetorical power which the English

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language can boast. In society, his manner, though somewhat reserved and stately, had all the courtesy which belongs to real high-breeding, and in domestic life he was simplicity itself—the sure sign of a mind superior to any station, how lofty soever, to which its possessor may be elevated.

9. His defects and errors, but noble use of power when acquired.

The great fault of Earl Grey, as of most men of his rank who are called to the general direction of affairs, was a want of practical acquaintance with mankind in all grades. He shared this defect with his whole cabinet, when arranged in 1830, which was almost entirely composed of the nobility; and so conspicuous did this deficiency immediately become, that, as will appear in the sequel, he was saved from early overthrow only by identifying himself with the extreme movement party, and advancing a measure which entirely and for ever changed the institutions of the nation. He did great service to his country by taking the direction of that movement, and preventing it from falling into other and less scrupulous hands, and deserves its lasting gratitude for the use which he made of the vast power he enjoyed when the victory was gained. There was much to condemn in the mode in which, in its latter stages, he carried on the contest, but nothing save to admire in the conduct he pursued after it was over. He then boldly confronted menaced rebellion in Ireland, coerced its wildest excesses, and when he had the power to have carried innovation in Great Britain to any imaginable length, stopped short with one organic change, and observed henceforward the landmarks of the constitution.

10. He was misled by others as to the effect of the Reform Bill.

Although the practical results of the Reform Bill, which he carried through, have been widely different from what he either intended or desired, yet this is not so much to be ascribed as a fault to Earl Grey, as it was the unfortunate result of the elevated position he occupied, and the sphere in which he had moved in society. In the framing of that measure itself he was as completely misled by the

representations of others of inferior rank about him, who possessed the practical knowledge which he wanted, and had their own ends in view in their representation, as he had been in early life as to the tendency of the French Revolution by the declamations of the philosophers and Girondists. He said it was the most aristocratic measure ever brought forward in Parliament, when it was a measure, as experience has now proved, which took the government of the country entirely out of the hands of the aristocracy. He declared he would stand or fall by his order, and yet he exerted all his talent and influence to carry through a measure which politically nullified that order, and substituted that of shopkeepers, with whom assuredly his aristocratic feelings had nothing in common, in its room. In this there was no duplicity or disingenuousness on the part of this proud and straightforward nobleman. He believed all he said, and acted accordingly; but his measures, being founded on no practical acquaintance with the community to which they referred, had a directly contrary tendency to what he intended, and ere long precipitated himself from power, and his order from the dominant position it had so long held in English society. *

11. Character of Lord Brougham.

Second only to Earl Grey in influence and station, and superior to him in versatile power, LORD BROUGHAM now stood prominently forward in a totally different sphere and position from that in which he had first moved and

* In the course of the debates on the Reform Bill in the House of Peers, Lord Sidmouth, who supposed Lord Grey to have been carried by circumstances far beyond his original intention, said to him, "I hope God will forgive you on account of this bill; I don't think I can." To which Lord Grey replied, "Mark my words: within two years you will find that we have become unpopular from having *brought forward the most aristocratic measure that ever was proposed in Parliament.*" Lord Althorpe, too, did not conceal his opinion; he avowed it, "that the Reform Bill was the most aristocratic act ever offered to the nation; and the wonder is, who can doubt it, while the new county representation preponderates over the addition to the towns."—See *Sidmouth's Life*, iii. 439; and Miss MARTINEAU, ii. 28-29. The truth is, that there was much plausibility in the reason thus advanced to prove the aristocratic tendency of the Reform Bill; and without doubt these noble lords were perfectly sincere in the opinion thus advanced. But what they did not see, though

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risen to such eminence. A tribune of the people, he was suddenly made a senator; a brilliant and successful advocate, he was at once, and without having gone through any of the intermediate stations, elevated to the very highest judicial station; a common lawyer, chiefly known in political or popular cases at *nisi prius*, he was put at the head of the Court of Chancery, and immersed in all the subtleties of conveyancing, and the niceties of the law of equity. He was the first barrister, if we except perhaps Lord Erskine, who was made Lord-Chancellor, and put at the head of the court of last resort, entirely from political considerations, and to avoid a difficulty in the formation of an administration, without any regard to his competency to discharge the important duties with which he was intrusted.

12. His merits as a Judge.

He was no common man who could stand such a change of position, not only with no diminution, but in some respects with an increase of reputation. It is reported to have been said of him, when he was elevated to the Woolsack, by a very great lawyer, "It is a pity Lord Brougham does not know a little of English law, for then he would know something of everything;" and certainly his judgments in the Chancery Court will never be placed on a level with those of Lord Eldon, or Lord St Leonards, or the other great masters of the law of equity. But it is a mistake to imagine that he proved a failure on the bench. It was not to be supposed that a man of his

their followers did, was, that these aristocratic tendencies were entirely neutralised and overpowered by three circumstances, the action of which has now been completely demonstrated by experience. These were—1. The working of the ten-pound clause, which in all the boroughs (that is, three-fifths of the House of Commons) vested the returns in *one class—that of small shopkeepers*; 2. The operation of the monetary laws, which, by adding 50 per cent to the value of money, and taking as much from the remuneration of industry, has rendered these small shopkeepers chiefly dependent on the monied and commercial, instead of the landed and aristocratic class; 3. The vast extension of the commerce and manufactures of the country, which rendered the greater part of the boroughs, and many of the counties in the manufacturing districts, dependent on the employment furnished by the great manufacturing cities, not the purchases made by the impoverished landlords in their vicinity.

extraordinary versatility of talent and variety of information should have acquired the vast store of precedents which can be mastered only by a powerful mind exclusively devoted to their acquisition; still less that he should be on a level with experienced equity lawyers, when the first time he entered the Chancery Court was in advanced years as its head. But his example, and the great ability which he has shown now for a quarter of a century in determining cases in the House of Peers, proves that an extensive acquaintance with precedents is not an indispensable requisite for a great Judge; and that strong natural talents, and habits of forensic debate, in a different branch of jurisprudence, may, when the cases are fully laid before him, sometimes enable the Judge to supply the want of early acquaintance with another branch of law. Lord Eldon's judgments on Scotch cases are universally regarded with the utmost respect by the Scotch bar, and yet he never practised at it, and had little experience of appeal cases from that part of the island before being put on the Woolsack.

13. His character as a statesman.

If the legislative measures in which Lord Brougham took an interest, or has been mainly instrumental in promoting, are considered, we shall have more cause to admire the variety of his acquirements, the versatility of his powers, than the length of his vision or the solidity of his judgment. He did not foresee the real tendency of the measures which he so powerfully advocated, and in consequence brought about results the very reverse of what he intended and desired. He professed to "stand upon the ancient ways of the constitution" in all his projects of reform; and yet he strenuously supported, or besought the House of Peers, "on his bended knees," to pass a bill on that subject, which entirely altered those ways, because, in lieu of the old representation of classes and interest, it introduced the new representation of mere numbers. He was the uncompromising foe through life of West India slavery, and the generous advocate of the

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poor negro's rights; and yet, by urging on the fatal step of immediate and unprepared emancipation, he has proved his worst enemy, and thrown back the sable inhabitants of the Antilles centuries in the path of real and lasting improvement. No man saw more clearly, or has expressed more strongly, the decline which would be brought on British agriculture from the unrestrained competition of foreign states; and yet he has been active in the furthering of a series of measures which have rendered Great Britain, in seven years, from being practically self-supporting, dependent on foreign states, in ordinary years for a seventh, in unfavourable ones for a fifth, of the national subsistence.* In two important particulars, however, his labours have been attended with unmitigated good. He has been, through life, the zealous supporter of the cause of general education, although sectarian jealousy has hitherto much impeded the beneficent results of his efforts; and he has devoted his great powers, with equal judgment and success, to the great and difficult subject of Law Reform.

14. His style of oratory.

His style of speaking, though always energetic and powerful, affords the most striking contrast to that which his taste approves, and which he has uniformly recommended to the imitation of others. The last is condensed even to the confines of dryness; the first diffuse to those of excess. No one feels more strongly, or has expressed more emphatically, the manly simplicity of ancient oratory; and yet no one in his own speeches has deviated more completely from the style of Demosthenes, or overlaid ideas always forcible, often striking, by an overwhelming

* Consumed in British Islands, 1854—

| | Qrs. | Qrs. |
|---|---|---|
| By man, | 32,850,000 | |
| By animals and distillers, | 16,350,000 | |
| | | 49,200,000 |
| Produced, | | 42,265,771 |
| Imported on average of seven years, ending 1852, | | 6,929,786 |
| Imported, 1853, | | 9,987,714 |

—M'Culloch, in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th edit., *voce* Great Britain.

deluge of words. It would seem as if in his own style of oratory he was desirous, by the process of *reductio ad absurdum*, of establishing the truths of the general principles on eloquence which he has elsewhere inculcated. This verbose habit is very much to be regretted, for, on the few occasions on which it has been avoided, he has left most striking pieces of oratory. His expressions in each clause of a sentence are generally forcible, often epigrammatic; it is the frequent repetition of the same idea in different expressions, and putting it in different lights, which weakens the force of his oratory. Yet, however widely it may deviate from the standard of ancient eloquence or ideal perfection, if we are to judge from the result, it was well calculated for the persons to whom it was addressed; for he was mainly instrumental in achieving the four great Liberal triumphs of the last half-century—the repeal of the Orders in Council, that of the Income-Tax, the passing of the Reform Bill, and of Negro Emancipation.

15. Lord Palmerston: his European reputation.

If there is any British statesman of his age who has acquired a European reputation, it may safely be pronounced to be LORD PALMERSTON, whose name will be for ever associated with the great change in our foreign policy, and the substitution of Liberal for Conservative alliances. Foreign nations, not aware of the vital change which the Reform Bill made in our Government, ascribe this change chiefly, if not entirely, to his individual influence; and according as their statesmen and historians belong to the democratic or monarchical party, he is the object either of vehement laudation or of impassioned hatred. In truth, however, he is not the fit object of the praise he has received, or the vituperation with which he has been encountered. In a despotic country, a minister may impress his own principles upon the measures of government; in a constitutional one he must receive it from the legislature. The Reform Bill having vested the government of England in the class of urban shopkeepers,

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the majority of whom are imbued with liberal principles, the carrying out of their wishes into our foreign policy became a matter of necessity, to which every minister, however otherwise inclined, must bend.

16. His versatile talents and character.

If this change of policy, however, was imposed upon the country by the Reform Bill, it is equally true that the character and talents of the Liberal Foreign Secretary, in a prominent manner, fitted him for carrying it through. His abilities are not only of the highest order, but they are of the most marketable description. No man knows better how to address himself in speaking to the prevailing feelings and tastes of his audience, in acting to the inclination and interests of the class in society upon which his influence is rested. Great as are his talents, varied his accomplishments, they are rendered still more powerful by the versatility of their possessor. He can be, when he pleases, all things to all men. He has been a member of every administration, with the single exception of the short one of Lord Derby in 1852, for the last fifty years. He has alternately aided in expelling his former friends from power, and reinstating them in office; yet, strange to say, his character for consistency has not materially suffered from all these changes. The reason is that all men see that, like the Duke of Wellington, his leading principle has always been the advancement of the power and glory of his country; and that he has taken a part in so many administrations, because they successively furnished him with the means of advancing that primary object. He has been through life not so much a statesman as a diplomatic soldier of the State.

17. His character as a diplomatist and orator.

His talents for diplomacy and administration are unquestionably of a very high order. To immense acquaintance with foreign treaties and conventions he unites the rarer but not less essential knowledge of courts and statesmen, and the prevailing influences by which they are severally governed. As secretary-at-war during

the contest with Napoleon, and home secretary under Queen Victoria, his administrative powers have been equally conspicuous; and such are his oratorical talents that no man can with greater certainty alternately keep the attention of the House of Commons awake during a long detail of diplomatic proceedings, or fascinate a popular audience by the beauties of a varied and highly wrought eloquence. Indefatigable in his attention to business, he yet finds time, as men of a similar energetic turn of mind often do, for the pleasures of society; and much of his political influence is owing to the charm which manners of the highest breeding, and courtesy of the most finished kind, lend to a varied and delightful conversation.

18. His errors.

The great fault of this accomplished minister—and it is a very serious one, for it has more than once brought his country to the brink of the most serious danger—is, that he never calculates the means at his disposal for effecting the projects which he has at heart, and engages in designs which he has not the means of carrying through, or stimulates movements in other countries which he has not the means of supporting. Bred in the school of Pitt, and essentially patriotic in his feelings and ideas, he sometimes forgets the difference in the situation and power of the country at different times, and has often held as high language in diplomatic intercourse, when a reformed House of Commons had not left twenty thousand disposable men in the country, or ten ships of the line to form a Channel fleet, as when Lord Castlereagh wielded the power of one hundred and fifty thousand, and one hundred ships of the line bore the royal flag. A sincere friend of freedom, he has sometimes proved its worst enemy, by stimulating movements of the liberal party among the excitable inhabitants of other states, which the people of this country had neither the means nor the inclination to support, and being forced, in consequence, to leave them to be crushed by the military

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force of despotic states. With admirable skill he arranged all the other powers of Europe to check the ambition of France on the Eastern Question in 1840; and it was owing to the influence of his diplomacy that the cordial alliance of France and England was formed which put such a bridle in the mouth of Russia in 1854. But on other occasions his ill-timed assertions of British influence have been attended with the utmost hazard; for they brought us to the verge of a war with France, and once with France and Russia united, at a time when the country was wholly unprepared to maintain a contest with either the one or the other.

19. Lord John Russell.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL has not obtained the same elevated niche in the temple of fame as Lord Grey and Lord Palmerston; but still the nobleman who carried the Reform Bill through the House of Commons, and has since for years held the highest place in the councils of his Sovereign, or been the leader of the House of Commons, must be regarded as no common man. As an orator he occupies a useful rather than a distinguished place. He seldom aims at the highest flights of eloquence, and his speeches are distinguished by business-like habits, by information on the subject, and acuteness in reply, rather than either genius of conception or cogency of argument. If he owed, however, the distinguished position he has so long held in the House of Commons, in the first instance, to family influence, and the prestige of an illustrious name, he has since shown that he was not unworthy of it, by the qualities he has exhibited while discharging its duties. To admirable temper and great tact in debate he unites a thorough acquaintance with the feeling and prevailing inclination of the House, and especially of his own side,—qualities invaluable in the leader of a party, and much more important than the more showy qualities which often dazzle only to mislead. His figure is not commanding, and his voice feeble, so that nature has not endowed him with the physical qualities requisite for

subduing stormy assemblies, but she has in a great degree made up for the deficiency by the gift of the prudence and judgment which succeed in the end in leading them.

20. His intrepidity and self-confidence.

Sydney Smith has said, that such is Lord John Russell's confidence in himself, that he would, with equal readiness, at a moment's warning, assume the lead of the House of Commons, or take the command of the Channel fleet, or undertake to cut for the stone. Assuming that the celebrated discourser has here strained somewhat for the sake of point, it is evident, from Lord John Russell's public career, that there is some truth in the assertion, though his success in literature and biography by no means warrants the belief that the confidence is well founded. On several important occasions he has shown that he does not shrink from responsibility, and that, supported only by courage and conscious rectitude, he can engage fearlessly in the most hazardous undertakings. His conduct as the leader of the House of Commons on occasion of the Reform Bill in 1831, and the war with Russia in 1854, and of Cardinal Wiseman's assumption of titles when he was prime-minister, sufficiently demonstrates this. Unfortunately, his colleagues in the Cabinet are not always possessed of the same determination, and thus it has not unfrequently happened that the most intrepid denunciations on his part have been followed by no corresponding state measures, and thus have entirely lost their effect. In one respect his conduct has always been worthy of the very highest admiration: he never shirks responsibility, but, on the contrary, not only takes his full share of it when his own, but generously comes forward to divide with others a responsibility which belongs to their department, and with which his connection is more nominal than real—a conduct which has done more than anything else to win for him the respect of the country, for the obvious reason that it is the rarest quality in public men, and the one

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which most observers feel themselves least competent to imitate.

21. Lord Melbourne.

LORD MELBOURNE was a man of very different abilities and character from the eminent ones which have now been drawn; but he has occupied too important a position in the councils of his Sovereign, on her first accession to the throne, and for some years after, not to deserve a distinguished place in a contemporary gallery of state-portraits. If his talents were not of the highest order, they were of the kind of all others best adapted for the important and responsible duty to which he was called, of guiding a youthful Queen in the first and most important years of her reign. To great and almost unrivalled powers of conversation he united the charm of the highest breeding, and the grace of the most polished manner. A man of the world in every sense of the word, he had mingled in all its circles only to glean from each what rendered him a delightful companion, a brilliant ornament to the most elevated. His store of anecdote was immense, and related to the most interesting characters; his felicity in recounting them equal to the tact with which they were given out or withheld. An accomplished classical scholar, and well versed in the traditional history of great families, he had little information on the subjects required by a statesman, and took his opinion on the measures brought forward rather from the authority of others than his own reflection. Yet his suavity of disposition and courtesy of manner conquered all opposition; and when, as prime-minister, he gave in the House of Lords, with perfect *nonchalance,* in answer to a question put to him, "I really know nothing at all about the matter," there was a loud laugh from all sides, and no farther inquiries were made. The truth was, all parties, and especially those of them who were nearest the throne, were aware of the vast importance of the duties which, when prime-minister, he discharged as councillor and almost guardian of our present gracious

Sovereign in her early years; and if we are to judge of the debt of gratitude which the nation owes him for the manner in which he discharged them, from the strict propriety and wisdom of her Majesty's conduct ever since her accession to the throne, the debt is great indeed. 1830.

22. Sir James Graham: his administrative powers.

Sir James Graham owes more to natural advantages than any of the statesmen who have been mentioned. A tall and commanding figure, handsome countenance, and powerful sonorous voice, give him the superiority in debate which, in civil almost as much as military contests, these qualities never fail to confer; and to these he unites administrative and oratorical talents of a very high order. As First Lord of the Admiralty on the Whigs' accession to office in 1830, and again when the Russian war broke out in 1854, he evinced a degree of vigour and capacity which was appreciated and acknowledged by all parties; and he displayed equal ability as Home Secretary during a very trying time, from 1841 to 1846. Indefatigable in his attention to business, and endowed with great powers of application, he is always prepared on his own subjects; and, unlike Lord Melbourne, can give a satisfactory answer to every question put regarding them. The expression of his countenance has a supercilious cast, a quality which has been complained of of him in official intercourse, though none is more bland or courteous in private society. He is a powerful debater, as well from the cogency of argument employed as the stores of information displayed, and is excelled by none in the rare and effective power of reply. Occasionally, though not frequently, he rises to the highest flights of eloquence.

23. His inconsistencies.

Inconsistency is his great defect, and his reputation has suffered more from this peculiarity than that of Lord Palmerston, who is also chargeable with it, because he has at different times taken more decided and contradictory views on the same question. There is hardly a subject of importance discussed of late years on which

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there will not be found, in the parliamentary debates, an admirable refutation of a previous equally admirable argument on the opposite side, of this skilful rhetorician. This, however, is the fault of the age and circumstances under which he lived, rather than of the individual man. Such is the mutability of general opinion in every popular government, that the rulers of the State can only maintain their ascendancy by changing with it. The philosopher may be consistent, because his aim is the discovery of truth, which is ever the same; the historian, because he traces the unchanging laws of the social order through all the mutations of fortune. But the statesman in a popular community, who aims at the enjoyment of power, can attain it only by the suffrages of the multitude, and to gain them he must often share its mutability. Consistency in such a case is a passport to ultimate fame, but it leads to present downfall.

24. Earl Grey's announcement of his principles of government. Nov. 22.

Such were the chiefs of the liberal party, who now succeeded to power, and in whose hands, with a few brief intermissions, the government of the country has since been constantly vested. Earl Grey, immediately after his accession to office, made the following profession of the principles of his administration, which diffused general satisfaction: "Prominently, and in the foreground, I place Reform in Parliament. I have, when out of office, declared that that great question could be satisfactorily introduced by the Government alone, and that the Government ought immediately to propound some measure concerning it. What out of office I have professed, I am now in office about to perform; and I promise that a proposal for the reform of our representative system shall be introduced immediately for the consideration of Parliament. It shall be a proposal not of any wild or unreasoning change, not of universal suffrage, not a mere theory of pretended accuracy and efficiency. I desire to stand as much as possible on the fixed and settled institutions of the country. What I seek to do is all that is

necessary to secure to the people a due influence in the great Council of the nation, and to secure by that means confidence and satisfaction in the determinations of Parliament. Anything short of this will be insufficient. But while seeking for this end, I am anxious not to disturb, by violent changes, the established principles and practice of the constitution. To such a measure I have secured his Majesty's assent. The important matter of the poor will also be considered, and the laws which regulate the provision which the State makes for them. The whole and earnest attention of my colleagues and myself shall be directed to economy in every department of the State, and every saving that can possibly be made shall be adopted with the most unflinching severity." [1]

[1] Mirror of Parliament, 1830, § ii. 310.

25. Distracted state of England during the winter.

After a few routine measures had passed, Parliament adjourned to the 9th February. The interim was a state of great alarm and anxiety in England. The southern counties around London were, as Lord Grey afterwards said in Parliament, "in a state of open insurrection;" and midnight fires or predial outrages seemed to have been imported into the peaceful realm of England from the distracted and wasted fields of Ireland. The special commission, however, which was opened in December, had a salutary effect: the execution of some desperadoes, convicted of fire-raising, spread a universal terror among the peasantry, and the transportation of great numbers of others, at length arrested the disorders which had attained so alarming a height. But the excitement in the towns was not so easily appeased. Public meetings were everywhere held, in many cases presided over by distinguished members of the Whig aristocracy, at which the most inflammatory language was used. Constant reference was made to the armed insurrection which had overthrown the government in France and Belgium, and hints given that, if the English aristocracy adopted a similar system of resistance to the public voice, their fate might be the same. These threats

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were always received with the most vociferous applause, insomuch that not merely the timid and temporising, but even the firm and intrepid, began to think that a general convulsion was at hand. Mr O'Connell and the other members of the Catholic Association were in an especial manner laudatory of the revolution at Brussels, which, as leading to the overthrow of a government and the disruption of a kingdom by a rebellion fomented by the Romish priesthood, was held up as a glorious object, worthy of general imitation.[1] *

[1] Ann. Reg. 1831, 2, 3; Roebuck, ii. 2, 3; Mirror of Parliament, 1831, 1209.

26. Agitation and increased misery in Ireland.

"The proceedings and language of Mr O'Connell," says Mr Roebuck, "became every day more hostile and threatening: he went about the country making violent harangues, gathering together numerous assemblages of the people, under colour of meetings for the purposes of petitioning, or of celebrating some feast or festival. At all of these meetings he did his utmost to excite his ignorant hearers, but always ending his speeches by some earnest recommendations to keep the peace, hoping thus to escape the law."[2] Such was the alarm generally excited by these proceedings, that the magistrates in the disturbed districts asked from the Lord-Lieutenant how they should act in regard to them, not from any difficulty in determining what was the law, but from uncertainty whether, or to what extent, the Government would enforce the law, or support the acts of the magistrates in carrying it into execution. The answer of the Lord-Lieutenant was sufficiently clear, and such as every lawyer knows to be the law, and every man of sense must see is an exposition of what is essential to the peace of the community.†

[2] Roebuck, ii. 16, 19.

* Mr Sheil, not the least violent or able of Mr O'Connell's friends, said at this time: "If the Union is not repealed within two years, I am determined that I will neither pay rent, tithes, nor taxes. They may distress my goods, but who'll buy, boys?—that's the word—who'll buy? Mind, I don't tell any man to follow my advice; but so help me God, if I don't do it, you may call me 'Sheil of the silk gown.'"—ROEBUCK, vol. ii. p. 15.

† "The law recognises the fair and legitimate exercise of the right of petition, and protects them in the full exercise of that right; but it does not warrant any assemblies having a manifest and direct tendency to a violation of the

But meanwhile distress, the usual accompaniment of agitation, which distracts the minds of the peasantry, set in with extraordinary severity in Ireland. Potatoes in less than usual quantities had been planted in Ireland, and such even then had suffered under the epidemic which afterwards made such fatal ravages in the country. Two hundred thousand persons were without food; and their sufferings were aggravated by great severity of weather, and want of clothing, food, and fuel. The peasants crowded in thousands into the towns, where they introduced contagion and death. When Parliament met in spring, one of their first measures was to vote £50,000 for the relief of the starving peasantry; but though this evinced a sympathy with their sufferings, it did no good except alleviating immediate want, for it was nearly all expended in forming useless roads, and making good roads bad ones.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1831, 302, 303; Roebuck, ii. 19, 20.

The declared object of all these movements was to procure a repeal of the Union, and unwearied were the efforts, innumerable the shifts, of Mr O'Connell to keep

public peace, under whatever name, or for whatever professed object they are assembled. Therefore any assemblies of persons, whether collected under pretence of petitioning, or of public exhibitions of strength and skill, or under any other pretence whatever, if from their number, acts, place, or times of meeting, or other circumstances preceding or accompanying them, they excite in the minds of his Majesty's well-disposed subjects *reasonable fears* that the public peace will be thereby violated, and the lives and properties of the King's subjects thereby endangered; or if they be so constituted or conducted as to induce *reasonable and well-founded apprehensions* that the motives and objects of the persons so assembling are not the fair and legal exercise of constitutional rights and privileges, but the accomplishment of alterations in the laws and constitution of the realm *by means of intimidation, and by demonstration of physical force*, or by any other than legal and constitutional means; all these, and suchlike assemblies, however composed, or with whatever view collected, are illegal, and are by the law denominated 'unlawful assemblies.' And it is the duty of all magistrates within whose jurisdiction such assemblies are called together (being first satisfied of their illegal nature), by all lawful means within their power to prevent such meetings, and to suppress and disperse them."—*Ann. Reg.*, 1831, pp. 301, 302. It is impossible to state the law more clearly than is here done, and it was laid down in exactly the same terms by Lord Tenterden and the Court of King's Bench in Mr Hunt's case. They form a curious commentary on the meetings at Birmingham, Manchester, and Glasgow, by which the Reform Bill was carried, and the monster meetings by which for so many years the germs of improvement in Ireland were crushed.

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27. Agitation for the repeal of the Union, and prosecution of Mr O'Connell, who is allowed to escape.

up the agitation for this object, without incurring the penalties of treason or sedition. The device usually adopted was to assemble the people in such numbers as to intimidate Government by the display of physical strength, and at the same time avoid an ostensible breach of the law by recommending peaceable conduct and obedience to the letter of the Lord-Lieutenant's proclamation. As fast as one meeting was proclaimed down, another was convened under a different name, or for a different avowed object; and in the interval letters were invariably published by O'Connell, recommending peaceable and ceaseless agitation, and promising a repeal of the Union in two years if his advice was implicitly followed.* At length Government, under the able and energetic advice of Mr Stanley, wearied with this interminable pacific warfare, determined on a prosecution, and an indictment was accordingly executed against him and several of his associates. The grand jury found true bills against them; and although they threw every possible obstacle in the way of the proceedings, they were successfully carried through. Mr O'Connell withdrew his demurrer, and actually *pleaded guilty* to some counts in the indictment. This was so unexpected a result that it naturally created a suspicion of some secret understanding or agreement with the Government. Mr Stanley, however, the Irish Secretary, upon being questioned on the subject in the House of Commons, emphatically

* "Let us be in no hurry. Events in England and on the continent of Europe are working for us. Every succeeding day weakens the supporters of despotism in every clime and country; each successive day strengthens the friends of cheap government and free institutions. Patience, my dear countrymen, and Ireland will achieve one more bloodless, stainless change. Since I was born she has achieved two such glorious political revolutions. The first was in 1782, when she conquered legislative independence; the second in 1829, when she won for her victory freedom of conscience; the third and best remains behind—the restoration of a domestic and reformed legislature by the repeal of the Union. This we will also achieve if we persevere in a legal, constitutional, and peaceable course. Let my advice but be followed, and I will venture to assert the Union cannot last two years longer."—ROEBUCK, vol. ii. pp. 22, 23.

denied that there was any such understanding, and declared in the most solemn way, "It is the unalterable determination of the law-officers in Ireland to let the law take its course against him." But in making that declaration that highly-gifted nobleman was not yet aware of the degradation which sooner or later awaits all who, for political purposes, ally themselves with popular demagogues—*Mr O'Connell was never brought up for judgment!* The Reform Bill was coming on in the House of Commons; a general election might at no distant period be anticipated; the support of the Catholic leaders in and out of Parliament might be required by Government, and the haughty spirit of Earl Grey yielded to the necessities of his situation. Nothing was done against O'Connell: he openly braved and abused the Government, but he and his party supported them in Parliament, and he and his associates were permitted to carry on for fifteen years longer their unchecked career of agitation, devastation, and ruin.[1] *

[1] Parl. Deb. ii. 494; Ann. Reg. 1831, 317.

On February 11, Lord Althorpe brought forward the budget, which, although not of much moment in a financial point of view, as its leading provisions were defeated

* "The Crown has procured a verdict against Mr O'Connell, and it will undoubtedly call him up to receive judgment on it."—*Mirror of Parliament*, 1831, p. 281. Such were Mr Stanley's words, in which he was undoubtedly sincere, but he was overruled by the Cabinet. The excuse put forward for this discreditable act—viz., that the act under which O'Connell had been convicted expired before he could be brought up to receive judgment—is unfounded both in fact and in law. He pleaded guilty on Feb. 5, and the Parliament was dissolved on April 22; and every lawyer knows that though an Act of Parliament may be temporary in its duration, the punishment of a crime committed while it was in force may be inflicted or continue long after. In truth, the whole affair was a mere compromise of justice for expedience, or rather party ambition; and it was discussed as such in the cabinet of Dublin, and produced an estrangement between Lord Cloncurry and Mr O'Connell; and such a violent altercation between the former and the Attorney-General (Mr Blackburn), who insisted for punishment, that the Lord-Lieutenant was obliged to take a pledge from both it should go no further. "I strongly urged upon Lord Anglesea," says Lord Cloncurry "*the prudence of allowing Mr O'Connell to escape*, as the infliction of a nominal punishment, which could only have endured a few weeks, would only have the appearance of impotent malice."—Lord CLONCURRY'S *Recollections*, quoted in ROEBUCK, vol. ii. p. 60.

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28. The budget, which is defeated.

in Parliament, was yet attended with very important results in a political, as that very defeat opened the eyes of Government to the necessity of conciliating their Radical allies, and had no small influence in the construction of the Reform Bill, now under the consideration of the Cabinet. The preceding year had been one of unsparing and unflinching economy, which had brought a considerable and real excess of income over expenditure. Lord Althorpe, basing his calculations on that year, estimated the national income in round numbers at £50,000,000, and the expenditure at £46,850,000, leaving an anticipated surplus of £3,150,000. Instead, however, of reserving this surplus, as it should have been, for the reduction of the national debt, it was resolved to take off taxes to more than the whole amount, and in lieu thereof to impose other taxes, which it was thought would be less burdensome to the people. The taxes taken off he estimated at £4,080,000, and the taxes to be imposed at £2,740,000, thereby reducing the anticipated clear surplus to £1,800,000 a-year! A woeful reduction, when it is recollected that, when the new system of finance began, and present popularity was looked for instead of ultimate good, the Sinking Fund was £15,000,000, at which level it might have been retained but for the immense reduction of indirect taxes forced on by the contraction of the currency.[1]

[1] Mirror of Parliament, 1831, 169; Ann. Reg. 1831, 125, 129.

29. Description of taxes to be taken off and put on.

This was a sufficiently alarming state of finances, with a view to the ultimate solvency and resources of the country. But it was rendered doubly important with reference to *present* interests, by the description of taxes which were proposed to be removed, and those which were to be imposed. The principal taxes which were to be taken off were those on tobacco, sea-borne coal, tallow candles, and printed calicoes; and no one could deny that the reduction of these duties would be a very considerable relief to the industrious classes of the community. But with regard to the new taxes to be imposed, there was

much more room for difference of opinion. They consisted chiefly of an increase in the duties on wine, *colonial* timber, raw cottons, steam-boat passengers, and half a per cent on the transfers of funded property.* These taxes were considerable in point of amount, but they were far more so in point of principle, for they indicated in an unmistakable manner the new interests which were rising to the government of the State, and the old ones whose influence was declining, and which were in consequence to be subjected to taxation. For the first time in English history, a duty was to be imposed on funded property; and by the equalisation of the duties on Baltic and Canadian timber, and on Cape and foreign wines, the chief colonies of the empire would lose the benefit of protection on the staple article of their industry. These projects might be agreeable to some classes of the community, but they were eminently distasteful to others; and the latter were those who, by the possession of the close boroughs, had hitherto ruled the State. From the very first, accordingly, a violent clamour was raised against the proposed new taxes; and so vehement did it soon become, that two days afterwards the Chancellor of the Exchequer was obliged to declare in Parliament, that the proposed tax on funded transfers was abandoned, and that, in consequence, he could not remit the duties on tobacco and glass. The proposed duty on steam-boat passengers was

The budget proposed stood as follows :—

| *Taken off.* | | *Laid on.* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Tobacco, | £1,400,000 | Cape Wines, | £240,000 |
| Newspapers, | 190,000 | Colonial Timber, | 600,000 |
| Sea-borne Coal, | 830,000 | Raw Cotton, | 500,000 |
| Tallow Candles, | 420,000 | Coals exported, | 100,000 |
| Printed Calicoes, | 500,000† | Steam-boat Passengers, | 100,000 |
| Glass, | 600,000 | Transfers in funds, | 1,200,000 |
| Auctions, | 60,000 | | |
| Miscellaneous, | 80,000 | | |
| | £4,080,000 | | £2,740,000 |

—*Ann. Reg.* 128, 129; *Parl. Deb.* (new series), ii. 411, 414.

† Though this tax produced only £500,000 a-year, it was stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the loss it inflicted on the community was £2,500,000.—*Parl. Deb.* ii. 414.

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also abandoned, and that of 1d. a pound on raw cottons reduced to $\frac{5}{8}$ths of 1d. The timber duties also were given up, by not being pressed to a division. In a word, the proposed budget was entirely abandoned, and the defeat of Ministers was so obvious that they must have gone out had they not trusted to the sheet-anchor of the Reform Bill, which was essentially modified by this calamitous issue of their first financial measures.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1831, 139, 140; Parl. Deb. ii. 526, 530.

30. Committee on the Reform Bill.

Meanwhile a committee of the Cabinet was sitting, and actively engaged with the formation of the projected Reform Bill. The committee consisted of Lord Durham, (Earl Grey's son-in-law, and who was perfectly acquainted with his views on the subject), Lord Duncannon, Sir James Graham, and Lord John Russell. The instructions of the Cabinet to this committee were quite general, but they amounted to this, "that the measure should be large enough to satisfy at once the public opinion, and prevent any further change; but which, while thus extensive, should be based on and connected with existing territorial divisions and rights. The constitution was not to be trenched upon, but the House of Commons was really to represent the intelligence, property, and feeling of the people."[2] The principles were first discussed, and the first draft submitted to the Cabinet proposed to make the suffrage in towns depend on a rent of £15 or £20, but combined with the ballot. This, however, was not agreed to, and Earl Grey held out for the higher suffrage for a time.* At length, as a measure of compromise, it was determined to make the suffrage £10 rent without the

[2] Roebuck, ii. 29.

* Earl Grey said in the House of Lords, on 28th March, "The first disposition of my mind was, to *limit the reform within a much narrower compass;* but after full consideration, and after having discussed the subject with my colleagues, I was convinced that nothing short of the present measure was likely to lead to the satisfactory result of fulfilling the wishes of all classes, and of giving to the Government security and respect;" and Sir R. Peel said in the House of Commons, on 19th April 1831, "I well know, for I heard it from the noble Earl himself, that at the close of last year the measure of reform contemplated by Earl Grey was of a more moderate nature—far more moderate than that which is now proposed. The present Lord-Chancellor, too, said the same thing."—*Parl. Deb.* (new series), ii. 1082.

ballot. No one thought of introducing a suffrage depending on a *different kind* of qualification, or was aware of the effect of making it depend on *one alone*. The principle being agreed on, the details of the measure were next considered, and the boroughs to be wholly or partially disfranchised. Lord John Russell furnished the materials for this important part of the measure, proceeding, of course, on the information furnished by others; and the principle adopted was, that all boroughs having together two thousand inhabitants should be wholly, between two thousand and four thousand inhabitants partially, disfranchised. At length the selection was made, not, however, without vehement charges of favouritism from the other side—"not wholly," says the Whig historian, "if my information be correct, without reason. Certainly some of the results did look exceedingly suspicious. Tavistock was the common subject of hostile sarcasm, and always, by some peculiar and happy fatality, escaped the drag-net of the dreaded schedules."[1]

[1] Roebuck, i. 30, note.

31. Feeling, and petitions of the country.

While these important discussions were going on in the Cabinet, and in the committee to which the preparation of the measure had been intrusted, the country was agitated from one end to the other with anxiety regarding it, and the agitation increased as the time for announcing it approached, until it became almost unbearable. Vast numbers of petitions were presented to the House of Commons on the subject, which gave a curious and instructive picture of the state of public opinion on the subject, and evinced beyond all question the deep-rooted desire for change which pervaded the middle and inferior classes of society. The great object of all seemed to be to secure "a real, not nominal, representation of the people, and put an end to the influence of the aristocracy in returning members of the House of Commons." As to the meaus for effecting these objects, in which all concurred, there was a great diversity of opinion, but the majority of the petitions recommended the shortening the

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duration of Parliament, extending and equalising the elective franchise, and the use of the ballot in elections. The evils which these changes were designed to remove were, the existing commercial and manufacturing distress, the frequency of unjust and unnecessary wars, the profligate expenditure of the public money, and the amount of taxes kept up to impoverish the country by squandering its resources on placemen and pensioners. In addition to these petitions, which were extremely numerous, associations were formed in all the great towns under the name of POLITICAL UNIONS, the object of which, like that of the Catholic Association, was to provide the means of permanent agitation, by raising funds, providing a staff of itinerant orators, calling public meetings, influencing the press, and instilling by all possible means into the minds of the people the belief that all their sufferings were owing to the want of reform, and would be at once removed by its adoption.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1831, 4, 5.

32. Introduction of the Reform Bill by Lord John Russell.

At length the momentous day arrived, big with the future destinies of England and the whole civilised world. To Lord John Russell, out of compliment to the illustrious house from which he sprang, was assigned the honour of introducing the measure in the House of Commons. The House was crowded to excess in every part; all the avenues to it were choked with anxious and agitated crowds panting to get the first intelligence of the eventful measure, and messengers mounted on fleet horses to convey to the newspaper offices, and through them to the country, the earliest reports of the debate. When the doors of the gallery opened, the rush was tremendous, like that which had been witnessed at the theatres when Mrs Siddons was to fascinate the world by her mimic powers. The House of Commons had become the stage, the world composed the audience. So well had the secret been preserved by the Cabinet, though so deeply interesting to so many, that not the slightest surmise had gone abroad of the intentions of Government;[2] and when Lord John

[2] Ann. Reg. 1831, 5, 6; Roebuck, ii. 65.

Russell rose amidst profound silence to state their designs, they came as much by surprise on the whole House as on the most distant parts of the country.

33. Argument of the Ministers in favour of the bill.

On the one hand, it was urged by Lord John Russell, Mr Macaulay, and Lord-Advocate Jeffrey: "The measure now to be brought forward, though moved by one who is not a member of the Cabinet, is the result of the united opinions of the whole Cabinet, and especially of the noble Lord at its head. The object of the Government has been to frame a measure which, without going the length of the extreme partisans of either side, shall amend all existing imperfections, and satisfy all the reasonable demands of the country. We desire to stand between two hostile parties, neither agreeing with the bigoted, on the one hand, that no reform is necessary, nor with the fanatics on the other, that nothing but the most extreme measures will satisfy the people. To attempt to satisfy the public mind will not endanger the institutions of the country; to refuse to do so might have that effect. We hope to take a firm and steadfast ground between the abuses we wish to amend and the convulsions we hope to avert.

34. Continued.

"Our ancient statutes of Edward I. contain the vital principles of our constitution. The 25th of that monarch, Cap. 6, declares, 'that for no business from henceforth we should take such manner of aids, tasks, nor prizes, but by the common consent of the realm, and for the common profit thereof, saving the ancient aids and prizes due and accustomed.' The 34th Edward I., commonly called *De Tallagio non concedendo*, expressly provides, 'that no tallage or aid shall be taken or levied by us or our heirs in our realm without the good-will and assent of archbishops, bishops, earls, barons, knights, burgesses, *and other freemen of the land.*' Although historical doubts have been thrown on this statute, its validity cannot be contested, for it is asserted in the Petition of Right that it was allowed by the judges in the case of Hampden, and is, in

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fact, the foundation of the constitution, as it has existed since the days of the Stuarts. The consent of the 'burgesses and other freemen of the land' thus required to the validity of any imposition was given by their representatives, consisting, by immemorial usage, of two knights from each county, two citizens from each city, and two burgesses from each borough. For two hundred and fifty years the number of boroughs so sending members to Parliament was one hundred and twenty, and thirty or forty others exercised or lost that privilege, according as they rose or sunk in importance. At the beginning of this period there can be no question that the House of Commons did represent the people of England, and continued to do so for a very long period. No man of sense now pretends that this House represents the people of England. If the question is to be determined, therefore, by considerations of right, it must be determined in favour of reform.

35. Continued.

"Turn now to the question as one of reason. Suppose a stranger from some distant country should arrive in England to examine our institutions. He had been informed that this country was singular from the eminence it had attained in wealth, science, and civilisation. If, in addition to this, he learned that this country, so great, so learned, so renowned, once in six years chose its representatives to sit in the great Council of the nation, and legislate on all its concerns, with what eagerness would he inquire by what process so important an election as that of this body was effected? What, then, would be his surprise if he were taken by his guide, whom he had asked to accompany him to one of the places of election—to a green mound—and told that this green mound returned two members to Parliament; or to a stone wall, with niches in it, and told that they returned two members; or to a green park, and told it returned as many? But what would be his surprise if he were carried to the north of England, where he would see large and flourishing

towns, full of trade and activity, containing vast magazines of trade and manufactures, and were told that these places had no representatives in the assembly which was said to represent the people? Suppose him, after all, to ask for a specimen of popular elections, and to be carried for that purpose to Liverpool, his surprise would be turned into disgust at the gross corruption and venality which he would find to pervade the electors. After seeing all this, would he not wonder that a nation which had made such progress in every kind of knowledge, and which valued itself upon its freedom, should permit so absurd and defective a system of representation any longer to prevail?

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36. Continued.

"It has been often said, and by none so often as the late Mr Canning, that whatever the constitution of the House of Commons may be, and however open to theoretical objections, it has worked well in practice, and has enjoyed the confidence of the people. Can that any longer be affirmed? Is it the case at this moment? So far from it, the whole people are calling loudly for reform. That confidence, whatever it was, and on whatever founded, which formerly existed in the House of Commons as at present constituted, has gone for ever. It would be easier to transfer the flourishing manufactures of Manchester and Leeds to Gatton and Old Sarum, than to re-establish confidence and sympathy between this House and those whom it is pleased to call its constituents. In a word, if the question is considered as one of right, it is in favour of reform; if it is considered as one of reason or justice, it is in favour of reform; if it is considered as one of reason and necessity, it is still more loudly in favour of reform.

37. Continued.

"We talk of the wisdom of our ancestors, and in one respect certainly they were wiser than we are. They legislated for their own times; they looked at England as it was before them; they did not think it necessary to give twice as many members to York as they did to London, because York had been the capital of England

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in the time of Constantine; and they would certainly have been amazed if they had been told that a city with a hundred thousand inhabitants would be left without representation in the nineteenth century, merely because, in the thirteenth, it consisted only of a few huts. They formed a representative system, not indeed without defects and irregularities, but which was well adapted to the England of their time. But when new forms of property arose—when former towns became villages, and former villages became towns—a change in the representation became necessary, to prevent it from becoming the mere vehicle of class government, and thereby proving a curse instead of a blessing to society. Unfortunately, when times were changed, the old institutions remained unchanged. The form remained when the spirit had departed. Then came the pressure almost to bursting—the new wine in the old bottles, the new people under the old institutions.

38. Continued.

"It is now time for us to pay a decent, rational, manly reverence to our ancestors, not by superstitiously adhering to what, under other circumstances, they did, but by doing what they, under our circumstances, would have done. All history is full of revolutions produced by causes similar to those which are now operating in England. A portion of the community which had been of no account, expands and becomes strong. It demands a place in the system, suited, not to its former weakness, but to its present strength. If this is granted, all is well; if it is refused, then comes the struggle between the young energy of the one class, and the ancient privileges of the other. Such was the struggle between the patricians and plebeians of Rome; such was the struggle of the Italian allies for admission to the full rights of Roman citizens; such was the struggle of the North American colonies against the mother country; such was the struggle of the *Tiers Etat* of France against the aristocracy of birth; such was the struggle which the Catholics of Ireland maintained against the aristocracy of creed; such is the struggle which the

free people of colour in Jamaica are now maintaining against the aristocracy of skin; such, finally, is the struggle which the middle classes of England are maintaining against the aristocracy of mere locality—against an aristocracy, the principle of which is to invest a hundred drunken potwallopers in one place, the owner of a ruined hovel in another, with power which we withheld from cities renowned to the farthest ends of the earth for the marvels of their wealth, and the prodigies of their industry.

39. Continued.

"The argument drawn from the virtual representation is wholly unfounded. On what principle can it be maintained that a power which is admitted to be salutary when exercised virtually, is noxious when exercised directly? If the wishes of Manchester have already as much influence with us as if Manchester were directly represented, can there be any danger in giving direct members to Manchester? The utmost that can be said for virtual representation is, that it is as good as direct representation. If so, why not grant direct representation at once? If it be said there is an evil in change, is there not a still greater evil in discontent? Can it be said that a system works well which has become the parent of boundless discontent—which has almost alienated the hearts of the people from the institutions of their country? It is almost as essential to the utility of a House of Commons that it should possess the confidence of the people, as that it should deserve that confidence. But it is here that the crazy part of the constitution is to be found; what should be the most popular part of the constitution has become the most unpopular. No one but a few insane Radicals wish to dethrone the King or turn out the House of Lords. But the whole people desire to alter the constitution of the House of Commons.*

"The fall of all the free states that ever have flourished

* The three preceding paragraphs are abridged from Mr Macaulay's speech on March 2, *Parl. Deb.* (new series), vol. ii. p. 1195, 1198. It is easy to recognise his composition from the condensation of the style, and the philosophical view of the subject.

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upon the earth has been owing to the obstinate resistance of the privileged classes, who had got votes, and through them the government of the state, to an extension of the privilege to other classes of citizens. Athens had twenty-one thousand freemen and four hundred thousand slaves; Sparta a still smaller number; and in the Italian republics there were twenty thousand electors disposing of the lives and properties of as many millions of unrepresented citizens. What interest can such a multitude of slaves of a class have in upholding institutions in which they are not allowed to participate? America was lost to England, because the latter contended for taxation without representation: there are many Americas in Yorkshire and Lancashire; let us beware lest the refusal of their claim produce a similar disruption in the British empire. Rome alone adopted the opposite system; she progressively extended the privileges of Roman citizens to all the inhabitants of the conquered states; she carried their affections with them, because she consulted and knew their interests, and she obtained in return the empire of the world. *

41. Continued.

"We have tried cruel operations: what has been their result? Does there remain any species of coercion not tried by Pitt and Londonderry? We have had laws, we have had blood. The press has been fettered, the Habeas Corpus Act suspended, public meetings have been prohibited. Have these measures proved more than palliatives? You are at the end of your palliatives; the evil remains: it is more formidable than ever. Under such circumstances, Ministers have brought forward a great measure of conciliation, intended to still all animosities, reconcile all interests, and satisfy all reasonable expectations. It takes away a great power from a few, and distributes that power through the vast mass of the middle orders. It is a mistake to assert that this change will endanger the monarchy. Is it only in the aristocracy,

* From Lord-Advocate Jeffrey's speech on introducing the Scotch Reform Bill.—*Parl. Deb.* vol. iv. pp. 796-799.

or the higher ranks, that the principle of loyalty exists? Is it unknown among the middle ranks, among the citizens of towns, or the yeomanry of the country? All history tells the reverse. But if it really were so—if the great body of the middle class in England look with aversion on monarchy or aristocracy, then we must rest in the melancholy conclusion, that monarchical and aristocratic institutions are unsuited to this country. The end of all government is the happiness of the people; and that happiness can never be promoted by a form of government in which the middle classes place no confidence, and which exists only, even for a time, because they have no organ by which to make their sentiments known. The truth is, that they are at bottom as much attached to our monarchical form of government as the higher; and they have become alienated solely from not being allowed to participate in it. Give them that power; throw open the portals of the constitution, and they will become its firmest defenders.

42. Ministerial plan of reform.

"To accomplish this object, the ministerial plan is as follows: It consists of three parts—those calculated to get rid of the close boroughs, those intended to extend the suffrage, those destined to diminish the expense of elections. To accomplish the first object, it is proposed to disfranchise entirely all boroughs which by the census of 1821 had less than 2000 inhabitants. This will utterly disfranchise sixty boroughs, and get rid of 119 members. With regard to boroughs containing from 2000 to 4000 inhabitants by the same census, it is proposed not to disfranchise them altogether, but to reduce them to one member each. This will cut off forty-seven members—Weymouth, which now, by a strange anomaly, returns four members, being reduced to two. Thus far the process of disfranchisement, by which 168 members will be struck off. Then as to the work of enfranchisement, it is proposed that seven large towns, hitherto unrepresented, should send each two members, and twenty others one member each. Twenty-seven of the largest

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counties are to return four members; Yorkshire, the largest of all, two members for each Riding, or six members. Ten new members to be added to London and its suburbs, which will, with London, Southwark, and Westminster, raise the metropolitan representation to eighteen members.

| * Boroughs Entirely Disfranchised and put in Schedule A. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Auldborough, York | Corfe Castle | Midhurst | St Michael's, Cornwall |
| Auldborough, Suffolk | Dunwich | Milborne | Sarum, Old |
| Appleby | Eye | Minehead | Seaford |
| Bedwin | Fowey | Newport, Cornwall | Steyning |
| Beeralston | Gatton | Newton, Lancashire | Stockbridge |
| Bishop's-Castle | Haslemere | Newton, Isle of Wight | Tregony |
| Bletchingley | Hedon | Okehampton | Wareham |
| Boroughbridge | Heytesbury | Orford | Wendover |
| Bossiney | Higham Ferrers | Petersfield | Weobly |
| Brackley | Hindon | Plympton | Whitchurch |
| Bramber | Ilchester | Queenborough | Winchelsea |
| Buckingham | Looe, East | Reigate | Woodstock |
| Callington | Looe, West | Romney | Wootton-Basset |
| Camelford | Lostwithiel | St Mawes | Yarmouth, Isle of Wight |
| Castle Rising | Ludgershall | Saltash | |
| | Malmesbury | | |

120 Members.

| Boroughs to be Reduced to One Member each.—Schedule B. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Amersham | Evesham | Lymington | Sudbury |
| Arundel | Grimsby | Maldon | Shaftesbury |
| Ashburton | Grinstead | Marlborough | Tamworth |
| Bewdley | Guilford | Marlow | Thetford |
| Bodmin | Helston | Morpeth | Thirsk |
| Bridport | Honiton | Northallerton | Totness |
| Chippenham | Huntington | Penryhn | Truro |
| Clitheroe | Hythe | Richmond | Wallingford |
| Cockermouth | Launceston | Rye | Westbury |
| Dorchester | Leominster | St Germain | Wilton |
| Downton | Liskeard | St Ives | Wycombe |
| Droitwich | Lyme Regis | Sandwich | |

47 Members.

| Towns to send Two Members each. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Manchester and Salford | Birmingham and Ashton | Greenwich | Sheffield |
| Leeds | | Wolverhampton | Sunderland |

| Towns to send One Member each. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Brighton | Huddersfield | Kendal | Cheltenham |
| Blackburn | Halifax | Bolton | Bradford |
| Macclesfield | Walsall | Stockport | Frome |
| South Shields | Gateshead | Dudley | Wakefield |
| Warrington | Whitehaven | Tynemouth | Kidderminster |

| Two Additional Members to | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yorkshire, East Riding | Norfolk | Cornwall | Nottingham |
| Cheshire | Somerset | Devon | Surrey |
| Derby | Suffolk | Essex | Stafford |
| Durham | Wilts | Kent | Northumberland |
| Gloucester | Warwick | Lincoln | Leicester |
| Lancashire | Cumberland | Salop | Hampshire |
| | Northampton | Sussex | Worcester |

—*Parl. Deb.* vol. ii. pp. 1072-1074.

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"The most important point of all—the qualification of the new voters—remains behind. The existing right of voting in all boroughs is to be made the same, and to depend on one *uniform qualification*—viz., the payment of a rent of £10 or upwards, or property to the same amount. Existing non-resident electors were to retain their right, but in future no electors in boroughs to be entitled to enrolment if non-resident, and all leaseholders for twenty-one years to be voters. In counties, copyholders to the value of £10, and all householders paying £10 rent, and all leaseholders paying £50 rent, provided they had leases for twenty-one years or upwards. No alteration to be made on the forty-shilling freeholders in counties. All electors to be registered: the registers to be made up by the overseers of parishes, according to the rating of each person; and the register to be made up and revised annually by assistant barristers appointed by the Lord Chief Justice. In towns, the poll to be limited to two days; in counties, the same, and the latter to be divided, so that, if possible, no elector should have more than fifteen miles to travel to his polling place.

43. Qualification of voters. The £10 clause.

"It may be objected, that the effect of this plan will be to destroy the power and privileges of the aristocracy, and exclude talent from the legislature. No apprehension can be more groundless. Large and populous boroughs will spontaneously choose men of great talent and public spirit. No reform can prevent wealth, probity, learning, and wit from having their proper influence on elections. Wherever the aristocracy reside, receive large incomes, perform important duties, relieve the poor by charity, it is not in human nature that they should not possess a great influence upon public opinion, and have an equal weight in electing persons to serve their country in Parliament. Though such persons may not have the direct nomination of members under this bill, they will have as much as they ought. But if by aristocracy are meant those persons who do not live among

44. Continued.

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the people, and who care nothing for them—who seek honours without merit, places without duty, and pensions without service—for such an aristocracy we have no sympathy; and we think the sooner it is swept away, with the corruption which it has engendered, the better for the country in which it has repressed so long every wholesome and invigorating influence.

45. Plan as to Scotland and Ireland.

"With regard, again, to Scotland and Ireland, the same principles will be carried into execution. In the former country, where the constituency is only 2500 for 2,500,000 people, and where it depends in counties on a mere feudal title of superiority, independent altogether of the property or possession of land, and in boroughs on the votes of self-elected town-councils, an entire change will be made. The qualifications will be the same in counties and boroughs as in England, so that in both political power will be taken out of the hands of the small junto in which it has hitherto been vested, and extended to the great middle class of the people. In Ireland, the ten-pound clause will be introduced both in boroughs and counties; and the franchise will be taken out of the hands of the corporations which have hitherto exclusively enjoyed it, and vested in the whole body of resident citizens. The general result would be an increase over the whole empire of about 500,000 electors, making, with those already enjoying it, above 900,000 for the two islands. Of these, 50,000 will be found in the new towns created into parliamentary boroughs in England; 110,000 additional electors in boroughs already returning members; London, 95,000; counties, 100,000; Scotland, 60,000; Ireland, 40,000. No change is intended to be proposed in the duration of Parliament, nor is the ballot to be introduced. The House will consist in all of 596 members, being a reduction of sixty-two on its present number of 658.[1] By such a course alone will it be possible to give permanency to that constitution which has been so long the admiration of surrounding nations on

[1] Ann. Reg. 1831, 6, 13; Parl. Deb. ii. 1062, 1089 (3d series).

account of its popular spirit, but which cannot exist much longer unless strengthened by an additional infusion of popular spirit, commensurate with the progress of knowledge and the increased intelligence of the age.*

46. Astonishment in the House at the bill.

No words can convey an adequate idea of the astonishment which the announcement of this project of reform created in the House of Commons and the country. Nothing approaching to it has ever been witnessed before or has been since. Men's minds were prepared for a change, perhaps a very considerable one, especially in the enfranchising new cities and towns which now were unrepresented; but it never entered into the imagination of any human being out of the Cabinet that so sweeping and entire a change would be proposed, especially by the King's ministers. The Tories never had dreaded such a revolution; the Radicals never had hoped for it. Astonishment was the universal feeling. Many laughed outright: those who did so were chiefly those whose seats were to be taken away. None thought the bill could pass; it was supposed by many that Ministers themselves neither intended nor desired it, but wished only to establish a thorn in the side of their adversaries, which should prevent them from holding power if they succeeded in displacing them. So universal was this feeling that it is now generally admitted that, had Sir R. Peel, instead of permitting the debate to go on, instantly

* The Members were thus distributed:—

| | |
|---|---|
| House at present, | 658 |
| Disfranchised, | 168 |
| Remain, | 490 |
| Additional Members for Scotland, | 5 |
| ... for Ireland, | 3 |
| ... for Wales, | 1 |
| ... for London, | 8 |
| ... for English large towns, | 34 |
| ... for English counties, | 55 |
| | 596 |
| Decrease from existing Members, | 62 |

—*Parl. Deb.* vol. ii. p. 1082.

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divided the House, on the plea that the proposed measure was too revolutionary to be for a moment entertained, leave to bring in the bill would have been refused by a large majority. The Cabinet Ministers themselves are known to have thought at the time that their official existence then hung by a thread, and that it depended entirely on the debate being allowed to proceed.[1] *

[1] Parl. Deb. ii. 1077; Roebuck, ii. 87; Ann. Reg. 1831, 14, 15.

47. Argument against the bill.

The course which the Ministers dreaded, however, was not adopted; the debate was allowed to proceed, and it lasted seven nights. It was contended, on the part of opposition, by Sir Robert Inglis, Sir Richard Vivian, and Sir Robert Peel: "This is the first time for fifty years that any person invested even with the reflected light of Government has come down to the House formally to declare that the House is incompetent to the due discharge of its legislative functions. It is the first time during that period that the advisers of his Majesty have thought fit to pledge their Sovereign before his

* "I have often heard," says Mr Roebuck, "Lord Brougham relate a circumstance connected with his celebrated motion, which vividly illustrates the ignorance of the administration, even at the eleventh hour, as to the real feelings of the people. The members of the Cabinet, who were not in the House of Commons, dined that day with the Lord Chancellor, whose secretary, Mr, now Sir, Denis le Marchant, sat under the gallery of the House of Commons, and sent half-hour bulletins to the noble lord as to the progress of the debate. They ran thus: 'Lord John has been up ten minutes—House very full—great anxiety and interest shown.' Another came describing the extraordinary sensation produced by the plan on both sides of the House. At last came one saying, 'Lord John is near the end of his speech—my next will tell you who follows him.' 'Now,' said the noble host, and narrator of the story, 'we had often talked over and guessed at the probable course of the Opposition, and I always said, Were I in Peel's place, I would not condescend to argue the point, but would, so soon as Lord John Russell sat down, get up and declare that I would not debate so revolutionary, so mad a proposal, and would insist upon dividing the House at once. *If he does this, I used to say, we are dead beat;* but if he allows himself to be drawn into a discussion, we shall succeed.' When le Marchant's bulletin at length came, which was to tell us the course adopted by the Opposition, I held the note unopened in my hand, and laughing said, 'Now, this decides our fate, therefore let us take a glass of wine all round, in order that we may with proper nerve read the fatal missive.' Having done so, I opened the note, and seeing the first line, which was, 'Peel (should have been *Inglis*) has been up twenty minutes,' I flourished the note round my head—'Hurrah! hurrah! Victory! victory! Peel has been speaking twenty minutes!' and so we took another glass of wine to congratulate ourselves on our good fortune."—ROEBUCK, ii. 87, 88, note.

people to the doctrine that the House of Commons is 'unworthy of the confidence of the people,' unworthy to stand between their fellow-subjects and the throne. The doctrine is not new; but the circumstances under which, and the persons by whom it is now advanced are new, and they invest it with a character not less novel than ill-omened. We hear much of the demand of the people for reform, and the perilous consequences which might ensue from resisting it; but the truth is, that the present excitement has arisen entirely from the example of successful revolution in France and Belgium, and will subside gradually when these convulsions have terminated, as terminate they will, in universal suffering. Even now the clamour, of which so much is said, comes from a part only, and that the least respectable part, of the community; and to it we may apply Mr Burke's words in 1770, 'Faction will make its cries resound through the nation as if the whole were in an uproar, when by far the majority, and much the better part, will seem for a time annihilated by the quiet in which their virtue and moderation incline them to enjoy the blessings of government.'[1]

[1] Thoughts on the present Discontents—Works, ii. 267.

"As to the measure itself, it has no pretensions to be what Ministers call it—a restoration of the principles of the constitution to their pristine purity from the pollution they have received from an accumulation of abuses. The very foundation of it, viz., that population and taxation should be the foundation of representation, never was the principle of the English constitution. Our sovereigns in early times called parliaments together because they wanted men and money, and the appeal was made to the *liberi homines*. The next step was the calling on 'communities' to assist at these parliaments, but then each community had only one vote. At that time the county of Cornwall had but eight members. How can it be contended that population and taxation was the principle of representation, when from the earliest times small towns in some places had been called to send representatives,

48. Continued.

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and large ones been left unrepresented? Can a single instance be pointed out in the whole history of England, in which a town or borough was called into parliamentary existence because it was large or populous, and excluded from it because it was small or declining in its inhabitants? Old Sarum, of which we hear so much, was never large or populous, or more so than it is now; on the contrary, in the same year, 23d Edward I., writs were issued for the first time to Old and New Sarum—the former to oblige the Earl of Salisbury, by putting his friends in the House; other boroughs, as Newport in the Isle of Wight, received members in the same way—in that instance to please Sir G. Carew. All the Cornish boroughs had sprung up in this way; while at the same time Halifax, with 8400 inhabitants, Manchester, with 5400, were never called on to send any. These towns had prospered without any representatives; and no one ever heard that their commercial interests had suffered from the want of advocates in this House to maintain their rights.

49. Continued.

"The constitution of England was fixed at the Revolution, and at the Revolution only. Since that time the Crown has not claimed the right of creating boroughs, and probably would not be advised to attempt to create that right by its mere charter. It may therefore be considered as certain that the House of Commons, as it now is, is the same practically as it was at the Revolution, *only* that it is more popular. It has adapted itself, almost like another work of nature, to our growth. How different is the county representation of England from what it once was; how unlike are the country gentlemen to what they were a century ago; how completely do they now reflect in their own the mind of their constituents, as well as advocate their local wants! Such, generally speaking, is the House of Commons now, and such has it been for a long succession of years. It is the most complete representation of the interests of the people that ever was assembled in any age or country. It is the

only constituent body that ever existed which comprehends within itself those who can urge the wants and defend the claims of the landed, the commercial, and the professional interests of the country; those who are bound to uphold the prerogatives of the Crown, the privileges of the nobility, the interests of the lower classes, the rights and liberties of the whole people. It is the *absence of symmetry in our elective franchise* which admits to this House interests so various. The *concordia discors* opens the door to the admission here of all talent, and of all classes, and of all interests. How far, under any other than the present circumstances, the rights of the distant dependencies of the East Indies, of the West Indies, of the colonies, of the great corporations, of the commercial interests generally, of the fundholders, could find their just support in this House, it is impossible to see. If all the members of the House represented the *landed* interest exclusively, the trade and commerce of the country would be pressed on by restrictive laws alike intolerable and impolitic; if, on the other hand, mere *population* were taken as the basis of the representation, the members sent here *would vie with each other in a clamour for cheapness*, to the destruction of the only permanent interest, the agriculture of England. 'All interests,' said Burke, '*must be let in*; a great official, a great professional, a great military and naval interest, all necessarily comprehending many men of the first weight, ability, wealth, and spirit, has been gradually formed in the kingdom. The new interests must be let into the representation.' *

"The men who have entered Parliament by means of the close or rotten boroughs, as they are called, have been its greatest ornament, and more than any other contributed to the prosperity and advancement of the kingdom. There has not been an eminent man in the House of

50. Continued.

* This paragraph is taken *verbatim* from Sir R. Inglis' admirable speech.—*Parl. Deb.* vol. ii. pp. 1108, 1109.

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Commons for the last hundred years, who did not [redacted] his career as member for some close borough; and if [redacted] door is closed, rely upon it the race will disappe[redacted] Lord Chatham came into Parliament in this way—[redacted] earliest seat was for Old Sarum. Mr Pitt sat f[redacted] Appleby. Mr Fox came in for a close borough; an[redacted] when rejected by a populous place, he again took refuge in a close borough. Mr Burke sat originally for Wendover; it was only in his glory he was transferred to Bristol. Mr Canning, too, had fixed his fame as member for Wendover before he was called to Liverpool. In later times, Mr Wentham, Mr Brougham, Sir Samuel Romilly, and nearly all the existing ornaments of this House, have owed their parliamentary existence to the same system. None have got in in early life for populous places, to which the representation is now to be confined. Had the system now proposed been in existence in their early days, they would never have been heard of. We are told, on the other side, that the professional class will obtain an entrance under the new system; but how is this to be effected? Will men of independence or genius condescend to the arts requisite to gain large constituencies? and if they will not, how or where are they to find an entrance? They obviously will find none, unless they condescend to prostitute their talents to the purposes of mob oratory, the lowest and most debasing purpose to which they can be applied.

51. Continued.

"It is said the House of Commons is corrupt, and this corruption would be removed by the proposed change of system. Corruption is of three kinds—by money, by place, or by party. As to the first, the thing is unknown in these times; it was not so two generations back. God grant, if reform is carried, it may be unknown two generations hence. In the time of James II. the secret-service money was a twentieth of the whole revenue, now it is a seven-hundredth part. But the House is corrupted by placemen! So far from it, there never was a time

when so few placemen sat in the House as at this period, or when the offices at the disposal of the Crown were so few.* In truth, no patronage remains to the King but that of commissions in the army and navy, which must always remain with him as long as the Crown enjoys the power of declaring peace and war. And as to the corrupting influence of party, so far is that complaint from being well founded, that it is universally acknowledged to be one of the misfortunes of the times that there are no leading men on either side under whose banners others will range themselves, and thus give character and steadiness to the Government, or consistency to the Opposition.

52. Continued.

"The monarchy cannot long coexist with a free press and a purely popular representation. It never yet has been found to be consistent with it in any age or country. We have a memorable example of what such a combination leads to in the annals of our own country, when the Commons, in 1648, voted that their resolutions had the force of law, and thereby in one day murdered their King and voted the House of Lords useless. 'I cannot,' said Mr Canning, 'conceive a constitution of which a third part shall be an assembly delegated by the people, not to consult for the good of the nation, *but to speak day by day the people's will*, which must not ere long sweep away every other branch of the constitution that might attempt to oppose or confront it.' The thing may not happen to-day or to-morrow, but before ten years are over the shock will be decisive. The examples of the National Assembly of France, of the Cortes of Spain and Naples, of the Chamber of Deputies last year in France, prove how utterly impossible it is for a purely popular representation to coexist with a monarchy. Forty years ago Mr Pitt declared that, 'from the period when the new and

* First Parliament of George I., were placemen in House of Commons, 271
Do. do. of George II. do. do. 257
Do. do. of George IV. do. do. 109
—*Parl. Papers*, p. 569, 16th July 1823; and No. 543, 9th July 1822.

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alarming era of the French Revolution broke in upon the world, I found that the grounds upon which the question of reform rested were essentially and fundamentally altered.' Is not the same the case with the last French Revolution, which, not less than the first, has entirely unsettled the minds of men, and blasted the brilliant career of prosperity which the Restoration had opened to France? It is possible that titles of honour may still be continued; it is possible that the House of Lords may have a nominal existence, but its real conservative power, its distinct and legislative character, is gone. The Reformers evince no hostility to the Lords or the Crown now, because they do not require to do so; they know, if they can popularise the House of Commons, they will get everything their own way.

53. Concluded.

"'The reformers,' says Canning, 'are wise in their generation. They know well enough, and have read plainly enough in our history, that the prerogatives of the Crown, and the privileges of the nobility, would be but as dust in the balance against a preponderating democracy. They mean democracy, and nothing else. Give them a House of Commons constructed on their own principles, the peerage and the throne may exist for a day, but they will be liable to be at any time swept away by an angry vote of the House of Commons. It is, therefore, utterly unnecessary for the reformers to declare hostility to the Crown; it is superfluous for them to make war upon the peerage. They know that, let but their principles have full play, the Crown and the peerage would be to the constitution which they assail but as *the baggage to the* army, and the destruction of them but as *the gleanings* of the battle. They know that *the battle is with* the House of Commons as at present *constituted*, and that *that* once overthrown, and another popular assembly constructed on their principles, as the creation and depository of the people's, will, there would not only be no chance, but there would not be even a pretence for the existence of any other branch of the constitution.'"[1]

[1] Canning's Speeches, vi. 361 *et seq.*; Parl. Deb. ii. 1090, 1126.

Such was the substance of this great debate, which, commencing on the 1st March, continued through *seven* successive nights, at the close of which the bill was allowed to be brought in and read a first time without a division; it being understood that the trial of strength was to take place on the second reading, which stood for the 21st March. Immense were the efforts which both sides made during this interval, and great the transposition of parties which took place during its continuance; but the Reformers gained greatly more by the delay than their opponents. All classes of the Tories, indeed, were reunited by the approach of danger: the divisions consequent on the contraction of the currency, agricultural distress, and Catholic emancipation, were forgotten; and a great section of the House of Commons rallied in earnest, and in the ancient spirit, round Sir Robert Peel, who stood forth as the leader of the Conservatives on this momentous crisis. Lord Winchelsea, Sir Edward Knatchbull, Sir Richard Vivian, were found by his side not less cordially than Lord Haddington, Sir G. Clerk, or his own immediate supporters. But the Reformers gained infinitely more than the Conservatives by the delay. The towns all took fire, and infinite pains were everywhere taken to fan the flame into a conflagration. The country for the most part stood aloof, but in silent amazement, stupefied by the din and clamour, and overpowered by the vehemence of the urban multitudes. The Reformers at once perceived the democratic character of the measure which had been proposed; *they* discovered its practical working as completely as its aristocratic authors had been ignorant of it.* An unerring instinct caused them to fasten on the £10 clause as decisive in their favour, and adequate for all their purposes.[1] "The £10 clause," said the *Examiner*, "secures the

Clear division of Conservatives and Reformers which ensued in the country.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1831, 77, 78; Roebuck, ii. 107, 109; Martineau, ii. 31, 32; Examiner, March 6, 1831.

* "I honestly confess," said Mr John Smith, a sincere Reformer, "that when I first heard the Ministerial proposal, it had the effect of taking away my breath, so surprised and delighted was I to find the Ministers so much in earnest."—ROEBUCK, vol. ii. p. 108.

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constitution on a democratic basis: nothing remains but to prevent Ministers from abandoning it." To this object their whole efforts were directed; and they began the cuckoo cry, "The bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill," which for the next year was the watchword of all classes of Reformers, and rendered it impossible for Ministers, if they had been so inclined, to recede from any material part of the proposed measure.*

55. Agitation in the country.

The interval between the close of the debate on leave to bring in the bill and that on the second reading, a period of a fortnight, was a season of incessant agitation and turmoil over the whole country, such as, since 1642, had never been seen in Great Britain. The press, following, as is generally the case, in the wake of popular passion, made the most strenuous efforts to inflame it, and these efforts were attended with the most signal success. Petitions were everywhere got up, and signed by thousands and tens of thousands, praying that the bill might pass "untouched and unimpaired." These petitions from the large towns had often 20,000 or 30,000 signatures; and though, without doubt, the usual arts to get names were practised with every possible exaggeration on this occasion, yet enough remained to show that the middle and working classes were nearly unanimous in favour of the change. So completely had their attachment to existing institutions been undermined by the

* "Ministers have far exceeded our expectations. The plan of reform, though short of radical reform, tends to the utter destruction of borough-mongering, and will *prepare the way for a complete improvement.* The ground, limited as it is, which it is proposed to clear and open to the popular influence, will suffice, as the spot desired by Archimedes for the plant of the power that must ultimately govern the whole system. Without reform, convulsion is inevitable. Upon any reform, farther improvement *is inevitably consequent, and the settlement of the constitution on the democratic basis certain.* If we supposed that the plan before us could be permanent, we should declare it insufficient; but we have no such apprehension in our age of onward movement, and we hail it as a first step to a greater good, and as a first step towards abandoning an odious vice. It does not give the people all they want, but it takes the arms from their enemies. Like Sinbad, we have first to dash from our shoulders the Old Man of the Island, and afterwards to complete our deliverance."—*Examiner*, 6th March 1831.

long and dreary year of suffering which they had undergone, and their passions been inflamed by the impassioned language everywhere addressed to them! To such a length were the people excited, that the worst and most degrading effect of vehement faction became conspicuous. Private character and worth were entirely overlooked, a lifetime of beneficence was forgotten, and the noblest characters, if they refused to bend to the popular voice, were put on a level with the most degraded, and abandoned to the whole fury of popular indignation.[1]*

[1] Ann. Reg. 1831, 77, 80; Roebuck, ii. 116, 118; Martineau, ii. 32, 33.

56. Courageous petition from the merchants and bankers of London against the bill.

While such was the vehemence of the populace throughout the country, and such the efforts made alike by the Radical Reformers and the partisans of Government to inflame and organise them, there were not wanting those who boldly stood forward on the opposite side, and exhibited the noblest of all spectacles, and the most characteristic of a really free people—that of a small but resolute minority, standing firm amidst the surging and surround-

* "The opponents of the measure were not treated as men entitled to entertain their own opinion, and differing on a question with which, by possibility, reason might have nothing to do. They were all dealt with as being profligate oppressors, who wished to trample on and plunder the people; creatures, therefore, to be hunted down as beasts of prey, if they did not voluntarily fly from before the faces of their pursuers. Was there a man who was distinguished for nothing but having discharged all his duties; who had borrowed nothing from aristocratic patronage, and was innocent of the receipt of one farthing of the public money; who, standing on no other foundation than that of his own honest industry and honourable aspirations, had gained for himself a decent reputation in his profession, or a respectable fortune in the unpolluted exercise of his calling; and did he, the most estimable of all citizens, doubt, as hundreds of thousands of such citizens did doubt, whether the ends of good government would be served by increasing, as Ministers wished to increase, the efficiency of a pure democracy in the constitution—such a man was placed beyond the pale of citizenship. He was a betrayer of the rights of the people, a corrupt plunderer of the humble and the poor; he was the mean and crawling slave of the wealthy few. He was entitled to no opinion, or his opinion was of no use except to degrade his character, for it was different from the opinion of those who thought otherwise, and who had determined, in accordance with the Ministry, that to doubt the unmixed wisdom of "the bill" was to manifest a corruption of heart, an incapacity of understanding, which unfitted the man whom they disgraced for any exercise of judgment on political institutes, and which invited and justified any charges which might be imposed upon them, if they could not be seduced by vanity or the love of power."—*Ann. Reg.* 1831, pp. 79, 80.

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ing waves of an overwhelming majority. First in position, as first in importance, must be placed a petition from the merchants and bankers of the city of London, which, presented at this time amidst the heat and din of the conflict, contains a mass of arguments, remarkable even at this day for the far-stretching ken by which it was distinguished. "While," said they, "we should have been far from opposing the adoption of any proposition, temperate in its character, gradual in its operation, consistent with justice and the ancient usages of the realm, and having for its object the correction of acknowledged abuses, or any amelioration in the administration of public affairs, we feel it impossible to regard in that light a measure which, by its unprecedented and unnecessary infringement on the rights and privileges of large and wealthy bodies of people, would go far to shake the foundation of that constitution under which our Sovereign holds his title to the throne, his nobles to their estates, and ourselves and the rest of our fellow-subjects to the various possessions and immunities which we enjoy by law; a measure which, while it professes to enlarge the representation of the kingdom on the broad basis of property, would, in its practical operation, have the effect of closing the principal avenues through which the monied, the commercial, the shipping, and colonial interests, together with all their connected and independent interests throughout our vast empire abroad, have hitherto been represented in the legislature, and would thus effectually exclude the possessors of a large portion of the national wealth from any effectual voice and influence in the national affairs."[1]

[1] Petition of London Bankers and Merchants, March 19, 1831; Ann. Reg. 1831, 81.

57. Second reading of the bill carried by a majority of one.

At length the debate on the second reading of the bill came on on the 21st March. It lasted only two days, and was distinguished rather by increased vehemence and acrimony than additional information or more enlightened views. The opponents of the bill openly denounced it as revolutionary, and as likely, at no distant period, to overturn both the throne and the altar. Its supporters loudly retorted that it was the only measure which could avert

revolution; and that the rejection of a bill on which the nation was so unanimously set, could not fail to lead to the most terrible convulsions. The press opened with the utmost violence on the opponents of the measure, whom it held up to the hatred and contumely of the country.* The nation was in anxious suspense for two days; but at length the public anxiety was terminated by the announcement that the bill had been carried by a majority of ONE in a House of 608. The numbers were 302 to 301, the Speaker and four tellers being excluded. It was the fullest House on record, there being only 50 awanting out of 658. An analysis of the vote showed how entirely the public voice had turned against the close boroughs, and how thoroughly the temper of the counties had been changed from what it once had been, by the low prices and agricultural distress of the last ten years; for 60 county members for England and Wales were for the second reading, and only 32 against it; while in Ireland the disproportion was still greater, there being 40 county members for the bill, and only 21 against it.[1]†

[1] Ann. Reg. 1831, 94; Parl. Deb. iii. 804, 818.

* Take as an example the following: "When night after night borough nominees rise up to infect the proceedings of the House of Commons, to justify their own intrusion into it, and their continuance there, thus imprudently maintaining what the lawyers call an 'adverse possession,' in spite of judgment against them, we really feel inclined to ask why the rightful owners of the House should be longer insulted by the presence of such unwelcome inmates? It is beyond question a piece of the broadest and coolest effrontery in the world," for *these hired lacquais of public delinquents* to stand up as advocates of the disgraceful service they have embarked in."—*Times*, 14th March 1831. See also *Ann. Reg. 1831*, p. 82; and *Parl. Deb.* vol. iii. p. 602.

† Over the whole empire the vote, when analysed, stood thus, pairs included:—

| | For. | Against. |
|---|---|---|
| England, | 229 | 237 |
| Wales, | 14 | 10 |
| Scotland, | 14 | 27 |
| Ireland, | 55 | 37 |
| | 312 | 311 |

—*Parl. Deb.* vol. iii. p. 818.

It is a singular circumstance how many of the most momentous divisions on record have been carried by a majority of one. The first triumph of the *Tiers Etat* in the National Assembly in 1789, when they constituted themselves a separate chamber, was carried *by one*; and it will appear in the sequel that a similar majority ousted the Whigs, and re-seated Sir Robert Peel in power in 1841.—See *History of Europe*, chap. iv. § 46.

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58. General Gascoigne's motion is carried against Government by eight. March 19.

This memorable division was hailed in the country as a decided triumph by the Reformers, and immensly augmented the excitement already so great on the subject; but by the Ministry, and those more immediately acquainted with the working of parties in the House of Commons, it was with reason regarded as a defeat. They knew that many of those who had voted in the majority had done so from the dread of losing their seats at the next election, but were in secret averse to the measure, and would do their utmost in committee, by voting for amendments, or staying away from divisions, to defeat the measure. No less than sixty votes for the bill were for places to be disfranchised or reduced; and it was not to be supposed that their representatives could be very sincere in the wish to have the places they sat for extinguished. This accordingly soon appeared. On the 18th April, Lord John Russell moved that the House go into committee on the bill, and stated several alterations on the details of the measure which he proposed to make, not affecting its general principles. Upon this General Gascoigne moved, as an instruction to the committee, "that it is the opinion of the House that the total number of knights, burgesses, and citizens returned to Parliament for that part of the United Kingdom called England and Wales, ought not to be reduced." The motion was seconded by Mr Sadler, in a powerful and argumentative speech; but strongly opposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who declared that "the object of the amendment was to destroy the bill." An animated debate ensued, which terminated in a majority of EIGHT against Ministers, the numbers being 299 to 291.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1854, 104, 108; Parl. Deb. iii. 1606, 1687.

59. Dangers on both sides in ulterior measures.

This was the crisis of the reform question. It was now apparent that a majority of the House was adverse to the bill, and that the only course which remained to Ministers, if they desired to carry it, was to dissolve the House of Commons. But this course was neither easy nor free from danger. It was well known that the King

had become seriously alarmed at the probable effects of the measure, and was to the last degree reluctant to appeal to the people on a question of such moment, and on which the public mind was so vehemently agitated. There was no saying what a House of Commons, elected in a moment of such unparalleled excitement, might force upon the King and the Government. On the other hand, the danger appeared to be not less in the end, and much more pressing in the beginning, if the sense of the country were not taken on a question concerning which the anxiety of the public mind had become so strongly excited. To do so was to follow the course prescribed by the constitution, and generally adopted in similar circumstances; and there was too much reason to apprehend that, if it were not followed, the threats of the Radicals might be realised, and the monarchy and constitution be overturned in some terrible convulsion. Ministers have since confessed that they beheld equal perils on both sides, and felt as if crossing the bridge figured by the poets, consisting of a single arch of sharp steel, spanning a fiery gulf on either hand![1]

[1] Roebuck, ii. 149, 150; Martineau, ii. 34.

60. Liberal settlement on the Royal Family.

Earl Grey, however, had judiciously taken one step, calculated, in some degree, to lessen these difficulties, by smoothing the way to a better understanding with the Sovereign. The whole Cabinet were impressed with the idea that William IV. was in reality as averse to them as his predecessor would have been; that they had been intrusted with the government merely because it could not be avoided; and that the first opportunity would be gladly seized to displace them. It is not surprising that, entertaining this belief, they were desirous of establishing themselves on a more solid foundation with the King; and with sovereigns, as well as individuals, it is not the least effectual way of establishing a good understanding to remove all difficulties about money matters. This was accordingly done. The committee on the civil list which, on Sir H. Parnell's famous motion which displaced the

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Ministry, had been appointed, had reported that a reduction of £12,000 a-year should be made in the expense of the royal household, chiefly in the departments of the Lord Steward, the Lord Chamberlain, and the Master of the Horse. This report gave great offence to the King, who required the Lord Chancellor to give him his opinion as to whether the committee were empowered to make such a proposal. Finding his Majesty thus disposed, Ministers conceded the point, and proposed £510,000 a-year for the civil list, instead of £498,480, as recommended by the committee; and at the same time a liberal jointure of £100,000 a-year was settled on Queen Adelaide. This dexterous move gratified the King in the highest degree; the bill, settling the civil list as he desired, passed the House of Commons with very little opposition, and it received the royal assent on the very last day of the session, a few minutes before Parliament was dissolved.[1]

[1] Roebuck, ii. 159, 160; Ann. Reg. 1832, 19, 22.

61. Efforts made to won the King by his vanity.

Ministers, however, had still a very difficult task before them in obtaining the royal assent to a dissolution of Parliament; for his Majesty was very reluctant to take so extreme a step, and the Opposition lost no opportunity, in public and private, of impressing upon him the great danger with which it would be attended. The great reliance of the Ministry was on the vanity which was the principal foible in the royal character; and this worked with surprising effect. The historian of the Whigs has given the following account of the manner in which they acted on this occasion: "The King was vain, and he was timid; he was flattered by his extraordinary popularity, and he was fearful lest confusion might follow a rejection of the bill. The Ministers were now compelled to play upon these two strings; to take every opportunity of making the King the subject of eulogy, of noisy and vociferous applause. He was delighted by the extravagant manifestations of his own popularity, with which the eager and confiding populace supplied him whenever he appeared in public. And he was, with great dexterity, made to

feel that all this vehement applause resulted directly from the public belief that he sincerely desired reform, and intended to support his Ministers by the whole weight of his prerogative in their endeavours to promote it. The people, from time to time, began to show symptoms of impatience and distrust; menaces were every now and then thrown out, which the Ministers were obliged openly to condemn, but which, nevertheless, very materially promoted the object they had in view, which was to make the King understand the ticklish condition of his present popularity, and the serious and imminent risk attending a positive rejection of the measure."[1]

[1] Roebuck, ii. 121, 124.

62. Means by which the King was induced to dissolve Parliament.

Notwithstanding all these arts, which they practised with great skill, the Whig leaders found it no easy matter, when the crisis arrived, to induce the King to dissolve Parliament. The Cabinet were unanimous in recommending it, regarding, with justice, General Gascoigne's amendment as the first of a series of measures intended to defeat the bill. But the Sovereign expressed the utmost reluctance to take the decisive step. The story told, and generally credited at the time, of his being so anxious to do so that he said, when informed the royal carriages were not in readiness to take him to the House, "Then call a hackney-coach," is now known to have been a well-devised fable; and the following is the account of this transaction, given by the historian of the Whigs, whose known intimacy with Lord Brougham, as well as the fact of his statement not having been contradicted by his lordship, entitles it to confidence: "On the morning of the 22d, Lord Grey and the Lord-Chancellor waited on the King, in order to request him instantly to dissolve Parliament. The necessity of a dissolution had long been foreseen and decided on by Ministers; but the King had not yet been persuaded to consent to so bold a measure; and now the two chiefs of the Administration were about to intrude themselves into the royal closet, not to advise and request a dissolution, but to request the

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King on a sudden, on that very day, and within a few hours, to go down and put an end to his parliament, in the midst of the session, and with all its ordinary business unfinished. The bolder mind of the Chancellor took the lead, and Lord Grey anxiously solicited him to *manage* the King on the occasion. So soon as they were admitted, the Chancellor, with some care and circumlocution, propounded to the King the object they had in view.[1]

[1] Roebuck, ii. 148, 149.

63. How the King's resistance is overcome. April 22.

"The startled monarch no sooner understood the drift of the Chancellor's somewhat periphrastic statement, than he exclaimed, in wonder and anger against the very idea of such a proceeding, 'How is it possible, my lords, that I can, after this fashion, repay the kindness of Parliament to the Queen and myself? They have just granted me a most liberal civil list, and the Queen a splendid annuity, in case she survive me.' The Chancellor confessed that they had, as regarded his Majesty, been a liberal and wise Parliament, but that, nevertheless, their further existence was incompatible with the peace and safety of the kingdom, and both he and Lord Grey insisted upon the absolute necessity of their request, and that this request was in pursuance of a unanimous decision of the Cabinet, and that they felt themselves unable to conduct the affairs of the country in the present condition of Parliament. 'But, my lords,' said the King, 'nothing is prepared; the great officers of state are not summoned.' 'Pardon me, sir,' said the Chancellor, bowing with profound *apparent* humility; 'we have taken the great liberty of giving them to understand that your Majesty commanded their attendance at the proper hour.' 'But, my lords, the crown, the robes, and other things needed, are not prepared.' 'I entreat your Majesty's pardon for my boldness; they are all prepared and ready, the proper officers being desired to attend in proper form and time.' 'But, my lords, you know the thing is wholly impossible; the guards, the troops, have had no orders, and cannot be ready in time.' 'Pardon me, sir; we know

how bold the step is, but presuming on your Majesty's great goodness, and your anxious desire for the safety of your kingdom, and happiness of your people, *I have given the order, and the troops are ready.*' The King started in serious anger, flamed red in the face, and burst forth with, 'What, my lords! have your dared to act thus? Such a thing was never heard of. You, my Lord-Chancellor, ought to know *that such an act is treason—high treason*, my lord.' 'Yes, sir,' said the Chancellor, 'I do know it; and nothing but my thorough knowledge of your Majesty's great goodness, of your paternal anxiety for the good of your people, and my own solemn belief that the good of the State depends upon this day's proceedings, could have emboldened me to the performance of so unusual, and, in ordinary circumstances, improper a proceeding. I am ready, in my own person, to bear all the blame, and receive all the punishment which your Majesty may deem meet; but I again entreat your Majesty to listen to us, and follow our counsel.' After some further expostulations by both the ministers, the King cooled down and consented. The speech to be delivered by him on the occasion was ready prepared, and in the Chancellor's pocket. He agreed to it, and dismissed his ministers for the moment, with something between a menace and a joke on the audacity of their proceedings."[1]

[1] Roebuck, ii. 150, 152.

64. Violent scene in the House of Commons.

While this extraordinary scene, fraught with the future destinies of England, was going on in the King's closet, a still more violent exhibition occurred in the House of Commons. That House had met early, as it was well known that a dissolution was about to take place; and on the presentation of a petition in favour of reform, Sir R. Vivian took occasion to arraign Ministers violently for their intention of dissolving Parliament. Sir Francis Burdett rose and contended that Sir Richard was out of order, as the question of dissolution was not before the House. The Speaker was appealed to, who decided that Sir Richard was in order. The Reformers, however, per-

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sisted in maintaining that he was not so, and the discussion was going on with great vehemence when the cannon were heard which announced his Majesty's approach. Upon this a scene of indescribable violence ensued. The cries were loud for Sir R. Peel, who rose, and was addressing the House with undisguised emotion, when the admonitory knock of the Usher of the Black Rod summoned the House to attend his Majesty to the House of Peers.[1]

[1] Martineau, ii. 36, 37; Parl. Deb. iii. 1804, 1806; Roebuck, ii. 156, 158.

65. Scene in the House of Peers when the King dissolved Parliament.

A scene scarcely less violent was in progress in the House of Lords when the King approached their hall. That House also had met early to discuss a motion made by Lord Wharncliffe for an address to his Majesty *not* to dissolve Parliament, and the most vehement language had passed on both sides in the course of the debate. As usual in such cases, each party accused the other of being out of order, and Lord Brougham from the Woolsack said, "I never until now have heard that the Sovereign has not the right to dissolve the Parliament when he sees fit to do so, more particularly when the House of Commons have considered it proper to take the extreme and unprecedented step of stopping the supplies."* Lord Londonderry upon this started up, denying the imputation; and Lord Mansfield afterwards rose, and was addressing the House with great energy on the awful predicament of the country, and the conduct of Ministers "in conspiring together against the safety of the State, and making the Sovereign the instrument of his own destruction"—when the arrival of the King cut short his speech.[2] The King, with a flushed cheek, and an unusual brightness in the eye, ascended the throne, and said in a loud and shrill voice, "My Lords and Gentlemen, I have come to meet you for

[2] Parl. Deb. iii. 1806, 1808; Martineau, ii. 35, 36; Roebuck, ii. 154.

* This statement of the Opposition having stopped the supplies, though very current at the time, and supported by the authority of the Woolsack, is now universally admitted to have been erroneous. It originated in the Opposition having, in the preceding evening, carried a motion to *postpone* the consideration of the ordnance estimates which stood for that evening—a postponement which Sir James Graham, who was in the secret of the Cabinet, and knew what was coming next morning, said, with a significant smile, was equivalent to a stopping.—ROEBUCK, vol. ii. p. 154.

the purpose of proroguing this Parliament, with a view *to its instant dissolution!*" A loud murmur arose, which prevented the remainder of the speech from being audible; and at its close both Houses adjourned amidst a scene of tumult and excitement never before witnessed within the walls of Parliament.

66. Violence at the elections.

And now commenced a scene which never before since the Great Rebellion had been witnessed in Great Britain, and never, it is to be hoped, will be seen again. The enthusiasm in favour of the "bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill," was such that it not only led to great and justifiable efforts on the part of the reforming party to secure as great a number as possible of seats at the coming election, but to the most outrageous and disgraceful excesses. Large subscriptions were made at the Reform Club in London, and active working committees appointed to carry on the contest, and so far all was right; and the same thing was done by the Tories. But, in addition to this, the press, both in London and the provinces, almost unanimously* broke out into the most violent language, and openly recommended the most flagitious measures. To the disgrace of English literature be it said, the first in talent, and the first in circulation, took the lead in this crusade against independence of thought; counselled the use of the "brickbat and the bludgeon," and recommended the Reformers to "plaster the enemies of the people with mud, and duck them in horse-ponds." [1] The advice was not long of being followed. The Reformers, especially in Scotland and Ireland, took advantage of the vast numerical majority they possessed to break out into the most violent excesses, which only demonstrated to impartial men how little fitted they were for the exercise of power. In London, the Lord Mayor sanctioned a general illumination on the dissolution of Parliament; and in Edinburgh, and other towns, where

[1] *Times*, March 29, 1831.

* The *Morning Post*, *Standard*, and *John Bull*, at this period, were almost the only honourable exceptions.

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the same thing was not enjoined by the magistrates, the Reform Clubs took upon themselves to order it. All the windows of those who did not illuminate, and not a few who did, but were suspected of Tory principles, were broken. "As dash," says a Radical, "went the stones, smash fell the glass, and crash came the window-frames, from nine o'clock to near midnight. Reflection arose, and asked seriously and severely what this meant. Is it reform —is it popular liberty?[1] *

[1] Martineau, ii. 41; Autobiography of a Working Man, 157, 158; Personal knowledge.

67. Dreadful riots in Scotland.

The Lord Provost of Edinburgh was seized by the mob on the day of the election, who tried to throw him over the North Bridge, a height of ninety feet—a crime for which the ringleaders were afterwards convicted and punished by the Justiciary Court. The military were called out by the sheriff and magistrates, but withdrawn at the request of the Lord-Advocate (Jeffrey), who pledged himself, if this was done, the riots would cease. It was done, and they were immediately renewed, and continued the whole evening. At Ayr the violence of the populace was such that the Conservative voters had to take refuge in the town-hall, from whence they were escorted by a body of brave Whigs, who, much to their honour, flew to their rescue, to a steam-boat which conveyed them from the scene of danger. No person anywhere in Scotland could give his vote for the Conservative candidate without running the risk of being hooted, spit upon, or stoned by the mob. At Wigan, in Lancashire, a man was killed during the election riots. In London, the windows of the Duke of Wellington, Mr Baring, and other leading anti-Reformers, were all broken; and those memorable iron-shutters were forced upon *Apsley House*, which, till the Duke's death, continued to disgrace the

* The Author's windows in St Colme Street, Edinburgh, and those of his brother, Professor Alison, in the same city, whose life had been devoted to the relief of the poor, though illuminated, were utterly smashed in five minutes, as were those of above a thousand others of the most respectable citizens in that city. A friend of his, who was in the crowd that did the mischief, told him afterwards "*the crash was glorious in St Colme Street!*"

metropolis. At Lanark a dreadful riot occurred, which was only quelled by the interposition of the military, and the Conservative candidate was seriously wounded in the church where the election was going forward. At Dumbarton, the Tory candidate, Lord William Graham, only escaped death by being concealed in a garret, where he lay hidden the whole day. At Lauder, the election was carried by a counsellor in the opposite interest being forcibly abducted, and the ruffians who did so were rescued by the mob. At Jedburgh, a band of ruffians hooted the dying Sir Walter Scott. "I care for you no more," said he, "than for the hissing of geese." Genius, celebrity, probity, beneficence, were in those disastrous days the certain attraction of mob brutality, if not slavishly prostituted to their passions.[1] *

[1] Lockhart's Life of Scott, vi. 286, 287; Ann. Reg. 1831, 152, 153; Personal knowledge.

68. Results of the election.

One fact was conspicuous on this occasion, which points to an important conclusion in political science. This is, that while in Scotland, where this appalling violence was exerted to intimidate the electors, who were almost entirely composed of the higher classes of society, two-thirds of the members returned were in the Conservative interest, it was just the reverse in England, where nearly the whole members returned, either for counties or populous places, were of the Reform party. Yorkshire returned four Reformers, London the same. General Gascoigne was driven from Liverpool, Sir R. Vivian from Cornwall, Sir Edward Knatchbull from Kent, Mr Bankes from Dorsetshire; even the Duke of Newcastle's candidate was defeated at Grantham. Of eighty-two county members only six were opposed to the bill; so completely had the heartburnings consequent on neglected agricultural distress and Catholic emancipation alienated those who for-

* Sir Walter's diary of 18th May bears—"Went to Jedburgh greatly against the wishes of my daughter. The mob were exceedingly vociferous and brutal, as they usually are nowadays. The population gathered in formidable numbers; a thousand from Hawick also—sad blackguards. The day passed with much clamour and mischief. Henry Scott was re-elected for the last time, I suppose —*Troja fuit.* I left the burgh in the midst of abuse, and the gentle hint of '*burk Sir Walter.*' Much obliged to the brave lads of Jeddart."—LOCKHART'S *Life of Scott*, vol. vi. p. 257.

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merly had been the firmest supporters of the constitution. In Ireland the whole Catholics threw their weight in favour of the Reformers, and secured a decided majority for the Government. Strange to say, the sturdy Protestants of England coalesced with the furious Catholics of Ireland to overturn the constitution! The conclusions to be drawn from these anomalous and unexpected facts are, that a long course of selfish legislation and unwise monetary laws had alienated the landed interest in Great Britain, and that on a social crisis, such as had now occurred, no reliance is to be placed on voters *of the same class in society* to resist the march of even the most perilous innovation commenced by their compeers. If it is to be checked at all, it must be by those belonging to a different sphere, and *enfranchised by a different suffrage*. The gentlemen of Scotland, voting on their estates, or the parchment qualifications for which they had given £1000 or £1200 each, courageously withstood the tempest; the forty-shilling freeholders of England, with very few exceptions, were swept away by its fury![1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1831, 154, 155; Roebuck, ii. 165; Martineau, ii. 41.

69. Preparations for insurrection by the political unions.

While the elections were in preparation or going forward, the political unions throughout the country were exerting themselves to the uttermost, not merely to intimidate their opponents by the threat of rebellion, but by organising the means of rebellion itself. The following account of their proceedings is taken from an unsuspected source, the able liberal historian of the period: "In March and April 1831, the great middle class, by whose intelligence the bill must be carried, believed that occasions might arise for their refusing to pay taxes, and for their *marching upon London*, to support *the King*, the Administration, and the bulk of *the nation*, against a small knot of unyielding and *interested* persons. The political unions made known the numbers they could muster—the chairman of the Birmingham union declaring that they could send forth two armies, each fully worth that which had won Waterloo. On the coast of Sussex,

ten thousand men declared themselves ready to march at any moment; Northumberland was prepared in like manner; Yorkshire was up and awake; and, in short, it might be said the nation was ready to go to London if wanted. When the mighty procession of the unions marched to their union ground, the anti-reformers observed with a shudder that the towns were at the mercy of these mobs. The cry was vehement that the measure was to be carried by intimidation, *and this was true:* the question was, whether, in this singular case, the intimidation was wrong."[1]

[1] Martineau, ii. 32, 33.

70. Universal delusions which prevailed among the people.

Future ages will scarcely be able to credit the generality of the delusions which pervaded the minds of the middle and working classes at this eventful crisis. The former flattered themselves that rent and taxes would be abolished, and the sales of their shop goods at least tripled, from the universal prosperity which would prevail among their customers. The latter believed, almost to a man, that the wages of labour would be doubled, and the price of provisions halved, the moment the bill passed.* The Anglo-Saxon mind, eminently practical, did not, in these moments of extreme excitement, follow the *ignis fatuus* of "liberty and equality," like the French in 1789, but sought vent in the realisation of real advantages, or the eschewing of experienced evils. It was this which constituted the strength of the reform passion; it visited every fireside with the expectant sunshine of domestic bliss. There was as much truth as humour in the picture which a sagacious and able Reformer drew of the expectations of his party at this period: "All young ladies imagine that, as soon as this bill is carried, they will be instantly married; schoolboys believe that gerunds and supines will be abolished, and that currant-tarts must ultimately come down in price; the corporal and sergeant are sure of double pay;[2] bad poets expect a demand

[2] Sidney Smith's Works, iii. 133.

* The Author often heard these opinions from the working classes at this period.

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for their epics; and fools will be disappointed, as they always are."

71. Rare examples of resistance to the general cry.

Amidst the general turning of heads there were some examples of courageous and resolute resistance on the part of the Conservatives, which, as they were prompted by a sense of duty in a case which was obviously hopeless, must command the respect even of those who are most strongly convinced that that sense of duty was mistaken. A petition against the bill was prepared and extensively signed by the bankers and merchants of Bristol, which ably and firmly, but temperately, stated the leading objections to the measure.* At Edinburgh, a great public meeting was held of those opposed to the bill, at which the late lamented Professor Wilson and the present able Lord Justice General (M'Neill), then an advocate at the bar, distinguished themselves on the platform. The higher part of the press also began now to meet their able and indefatigable opponents with a sturdy array of facts and arguments. In this warfare of the pen, the *Edinburgh Review*, the *Examiner*, and the *Spectator*, on the one side, took the lead, and the *Quarterly Review*, *Blackwood's Magazine*, and *Fraser's Magazine*, on the other; and in some of their essays, composed during the heat of the conflict, and in the most violent state of general excitement, the consequences of the measure were predicted with a truth which subsequent experience has verified to the letter.†

* "This declaration, though proved to be mistaken in its view, was in its diction and manner calm, loyal, and courageous. If the opposition of the anti-reformers had been more generally of this character, there would have been less marshalling of the political unions."—MARTINEAU, vol. ii. p. 33.

† "The fundamental and irremediable defect of the proposed constitution is, that it vests an overwhelming majority in the populace of the island, to the exclusion of all the other great and weighty interests of the British empire. By vesting the right of returning members to Parliament in forty-shilling and ultimately £10 freeholders in counties, and £10 house or shop holders in towns, the command of the legislature will be placed in hands inaccessible, save by actual bribery, to the approach of the commercial, colonial, or shipping interests. If such a change does not soon produce a revolution, it will in the end infallibly lead to the dismemberment of the empire. The Indian and Canadian dependencies will not long submit to the rule of the populace in the *dominant*

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72. King's speech on opening Parliament.

Parliament met on the 21st June, and the speech from the throne said: "Having had recourse to the dissolution of Parliament, for the purpose of ascertaining the sense of my people on the expedience of a reform in the representation, I have now to recommend that important question to your earliest and most attentive consideration. Great distress exists in Ireland; the most pressing cases have been relieved by temporary measures, and Parliament is invited to consider what measures should be adopted to assist the country, in order to prevent the recurrence of the like evils. Local disturbances, unconnected with political causes, have taken place in various

*island*, indifferent to their interests, ignorant of their circumstances, careless of their welfare. This evil is inherent in all systems of *uniform representation*, and must to the end of time render it unfit for the representation of a great and varied empire. Being based mainly upon *one class in society*, it contains no provision for the interest of the other classes, and still less for the welfare of the remote but important parts of the empire. The great majority of electors being possessed of houses rented from £10 to £20 a-year—that is, enjoying an income of from £60 to £120 per annum—the representatives will be persons inclined to support their local and immediate interests. The remote possessions of the empire can have no influence on such men, save by the corrupted channel of actual bribery. The most valuable feature of the British constitution, that of affording an inlet through the close boroughs to all the great and varied interests of the empire, will be destroyed. The Reform Bill should be styled, 'A bill for *disfranchising the colonial, commercial, and shipping interests*, and vesting the exclusive right of returning members of Parliament in the populace of Great Britain and Ireland.

"What the measures are which they will force upon the Government may be judged of by those which have been commenced to conciliate their good-will: confiscation of the Funds, under the name of taxes upon transfers, or a heavy property-tax,—of land, under the name of a duty of succession; the withdrawal of all protecting duties on the produce of the colonies; the sacrifice of every other interest to furnish cheap articles of necessity or convenience to the sovereign multitude in towns, will and *must be* the future policy of the Government. The landed interest will be sacrificed by a repeal of the Corn Laws, to procure their favour by the purchase of cheap bread; the Canadas will be lost from the throwing open the trade in timber; the West Indies will be ruined in the conflagration consequent on immediate emancipation of the negroes, or in the losses arising from a free trade in sugar; the East India interest, deprived of the monopoly of the China trade, will be reduced to the doubtful military sovereignty of a distant continent. These effects may not all follow at once: considerable periods may elapse between each successive step; but their ultimate establishment under a reformed Parliament is as certain as that night succeeds day."—*Blackwood's Magazine*, May and June 1831, vol. xxix. pp. 748, 976. The Author is happy to think, after the lapse of twenty-five years, he has no reason to regret, and no cause to retract, predictions uttered during the first heat of the conflict.

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parts of Ireland, especially Clare, Roscommon, and Galway, for the repression of which the constitutional authority of the law has been vigorously and successfully applied, and thus the necessity of enacting laws to strengthen the executive, will, it is hoped, be prevented. To avert such a necessity ever has been my anxious wish; but if it should arise, I do not doubt your firm resolution to maintain the power and order of society, by the adoption of such measures as may be necessary for their more effectual protection." [1]

[1] Parl. Deb. iv. 86, 87; Ann. Reg. 1831, 156.

73. The Reform Bill is carried by a majority of 136.

The first question brought forward, of course, was the all-engrossing one of Reform. The bill was read a first time without opposition, the debate being reserved for the second reading, which came on on the 4th July, before which time the Scotch and Irish Reform Bills had also been brought in. The debate lasted three nights, but it was distinguished by no novelty, excepting increased vehemence on both sides; revolution being confidently predicted by the opponents of the measure if the bill passed, and as openly threatened by the other if it should be thrown out. At length, all parties being worn out by the speeches, the division was loudly called for, and the second reading was carried by a majority of 136, in a House of 598 members. This majority, how great and decisive soever, was scarcely so large as had been anticipated by those who had seen the results of the elections, and the universal transports under which they had been conducted.[2]

[2] Parl. Deb. iv. 906; Ann. Reg. 1831, 165, 166.

74. Discussion on particular boroughs —Appleby.

The bill now went into committee, when the case of each individual borough which it was proposed to disfranchise came under consideration. The first which came, from its alphabetical position in Schedule A, was Appleby, and it led to a long and keen debate as to whether the census of 1821, which brought it below two thousand inhabitants, should be taken as the rule, in opposition to the allegation of the inhabitants that their number now exceeded two thousand, and that this had been established by the census of the population just completed. Ministers

resisted this to the uttermost, upon the ground that the progress of a great national measure could not be arrested by investigation concerning so insignificant a place as Appleby, and so it was carried by a majority of 97, the numbers being 284 to 187. The Opposition, however, was not discouraged, for next day Mr Wynn moved a general resolution, that the consideration of the schedules should be postponed,—avowedly for the purpose of taking advantage of the new census, the report of which might be expected in a few weeks. "After," said Sir Robert Peel, "having obtained so large a majority as 136 on the principle of the bill, Government would have acted wisely, even for the interests of the measure itself, to have postponed going into the details of the bill till they were in possession of better documents on which to proceed. They know what is coming, they are aware of the event which is casting its shadow before; namely, that the boroughs will be overtaken by the population returns of 1831. In another fortnight these returns will be laid before the House; and though his Majesty's ministers now proceed expressly on the doctrine of a population of two thousand or four thousand, they are guilty of the inconceivable absurdity of proceeding on the returns of 1821, when they can so soon be in possession of the census of 1831. Before this bill leaves this House, it may be shown that so inapplicable are the returns of 1821, that there are many boroughs so increased since that time in population, as that they are now excluded, while they ought to be included in the enjoyment of the franchise." The House, however, by a majority of 118, determined to proceed, making the census of 1821 the rule.[1]

[1] Mirror of Parliament, Sept. 2, i. 551; Ann. Reg. 1831, 118.

A protracted and tedious series of debates ensued on the details of the measure and the disfranchisement of particular boroughs, which continued, without interruption, for two months, but in which Ministers uniformly had triumphant majorities. The mind of Mr Croker, forcible and indefatigable, but minute and microscopic,

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shone forth with peculiar lustre in these discussions. Two points of general and lasting interest were, however, determined in the course of these interminable debates.

75. Motion to give members to the colonies negatived without a division. Aug. 16.

The first was a motion, brought forward by Mr Hume on 16th August, that members should be given to the colonies; and the proposal was of the most moderate kind; for all he asked was, that 19 members should be given *to the whole colonies of Great Britain*, including four for British India, with its 100,000,000 of inhabitants.* The proposal was supported by the Conservatives, but excited very little attention, *and was negatived without a division.* When "Australia" was read out as to send a member, there was a loud laugh. "Gentlemen," said Mr Hume, "may laugh; but it can be shown that Australia already has twenty times the number of inhabitants of many of the boroughs in England which are now to be enfranchised." Within twenty-five years of the time when these words were spoken, Australia had a population of 600,000 souls, took off annually £14,000,000 of British manufactures, and a single province of it (Victoria) yielded the local government a revenue of £3,500,000 a-year! It is a curious and instructive proof of the inherent and universal selfishness and thirst for power in all ranks, that, at the very moment when the Reformers of England were most strenuously contending for and successfully asserting the right of the middle classes at home to a preponderating share in the government, they would not *even entertain a proposal* for the extension of similar rights, in the smallest degree, to their fellow-countrymen beyond the seas! It may safely be affirmed, that the future destinies of the British empire, and its dissolution at no distant period, were determined on this eventful though unobserved night; for, can it be supposed that the vast and rapidly-growing colonies, destined ere long to outstrip the mother country in wealth, commerce, and population,[1] will

[1] Parl. Deb. vi. 114, 126.

* He proposed to give British India 4, Crown colonies 8, Canada 3, West Indies 3, Channel Islands 1—total, 19.

remain permanently subject to a legislature exclusively elected by the inhabitants of a distant island, ignorant of their circumstances, indifferent to their wants, and actuated by interests adverse to their prosperity? *

"Cœlum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt."

76. Marquess of Chandos' motion on £50 tenants carried.

If the subject of colonial representation excited no attention in the whirlwind of domestic reform, the same could not be said of another topic brought forward by Lord Chandos, which was the extension of the elective franchise to tenants-at-will. By the bill as it originally stood, tenants holding leases for twenty-one years or more, and paying £50 rent, were to obtain votes in counties. This clause, however, applied to a very small number of such persons, leases being rare in England. The Marquess of Chandos now moved that tenants-at-will should be enfranchised who paid £50 rent—a great change, for it went to admit the whole body of the English tenantry holding farms to that value. The debate was short, for the minds of nearly all were made

* It cannot be said that this decision was come to in ignorance of the circumstances and claims of the colonies; for, in the course of the brief debate on Mr Hume's motion, Mr Keith Douglas observed: "In the present times of sweeping and universal change, the plan of the honourable member for Middlesex is a subject of the very highest importance. The idea of giving due proportion to the commerce and colonies which had raised this country to its present pitch of greatness, was worthy of the most attentive consideration. It appeared, by the returns of 1827, that our colonial imports were then worth £90,000,000 (official value), and our exports £80,000,000; that the ships employed in this trade amounted to 4580, and their tonnage to 900,000, independent of those employed in the colonies themselves. They were now about to *localise the representation*, and in all probability the various boroughs would in future return gentlemen resident in their immediate vicinity, so that the class of persons connected with the colonies, who had hitherto found their way into Parliament, and who were alone able to give information concerning colonial matters, would be completely excluded. In whatever point of view the great question of our colonial policy and government came to be considered, it was impossible to doubt that the honourable member for Middlesex had done perfectly right in bringing it forward." Hansard's *Reports* bear, "He (Mr Hume) had begun his speech by expressing a fear that very few members who heard him would give their attention to the subject; but he was now convinced that those who laughed did give their attention to the subject—the late Secretary of the Admiralty might laugh. (Mr Croker, 'I did not laugh at all; I was reading this paper')."—*Parl. Deb.* vol. vi. pp. 122-126.

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up on the subject; and the Whig territorial magnates, though obliged for consistency's sake to side with the Government in opposing the amendment, were in secret most anxious for its adoption. The result was that the amendment was carried by a majority of 84—the numbers being 232 to 148. Ministers, nothing loth, acquiesced in the change, which became, and has ever since continued, an integral part of the Reform Act. There can be no doubt that it was a very great improvement on the measure, and that on principle, irrespective of its influence on the state of parties in the House. It introduced at once a class of voters qualified by *a different franchise* from the general £10 voters, and thus tended to modify, in some degree, that fatal vesting of power in one single class of society, which is the invariable and worst effect of a uniform system of representation.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. vi. 277, 287; Ann. Reg. 1831, 214.

77. Bill read a third time, and passed. Sept. 21.

At length, after having undergone an amount of discussion unparalleled even in the long annals of parliamentary warfare, the bill approached its final stage in the Lower House. On the 21st September it was passed by a majority of 109—the numbers being 345 to 236. This division was received with loud and long-continued cheers, which were prolonged through great part of the night in the streets of the metropolis, which was violently agitated. The news spread like wildfire through the country, and was almost everywhere received with ringing of bells and acclamations. London was partially illuminated, and the windows of those who declined to do so were generally broken: but the excitement over the country was not so violent as on the dissolution of Parliament in the April preceding, because that was the first decisive victory; this had long been foreseen.[2]

[2] Ann. Reg. 1831, 251; Parl. Deb. vi. 463.

78. Efforts to intimidate the Peers.

All eyes were now turned to the House of Peers; and the question, "What will the Lords do?" was in every mouth. All the usual engines of intimidation were applied to the Peers, and the bishops, in particular, were daily threatened by the press and the political unions

with spoliation, deprivation, and even death, if they persisted in opposing the voice of the people. Meetings were called to inform the Peers of the "tremendous consequences of rejecting the bill, and how deeply the security of commercial, as well as all other property, would be shaken, if the bill were any longer delayed. The Peers would be insane if they refused to do so; they would pass it, as they hoped to transmit their honours to their children; they would pass it, if they desired to retain their rank and legitimate privileges; and they would, moreover, pass it without delay, for the public would not submit much longer to see trade stand still, and business remain in protracted stagnation, on account of such tediously protracted expectation. The people will thenceforward not pay taxes, nor would they be justified in doing so, when the country had decided that the constitution was not such as it ought to be. Let the Lords refuse this bill if they dare; and if they do, dearly will they rue their obstinacy hereafter." [1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1831, 254; Roebuck, ii. 202, 203; Martineau, ii. 43.

79. Lord Grey's speech in the House of Lords.

Amidst all this violence and excitement the bill was carried to the Upper House. It was read a first time without opposition, and the second reading came on on October 3. The debate lasted for five nights, and much exceeded that of the Commons in dignity, statesmanlike views, and eloquence; giving thus the clearest proof of the weight which the Upper House had acquired, by the successive additions of talent of the highest order from the Lower. "It exhibited," says Mr Roebuck, "a most admirable, striking, and memorable example of finished excellence in parliamentary discussion." Earl Grey moved the second reading in a calm, dignified, and powerful speech, which concluded with these memorable words: "Brave I know your lordships to be, and angrily susceptible when approached with a menace. I fling aside all ideas of menace and intimidation; but I conjure you, as you value your rights and dignities, and as you wish to transmit them unimpaired to your posterity, to lend a

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willing ear to the representations of the people. Do not take up a position which will show that you will not attend to the voice of nine-tenths of the people, who call upon you, in a tone too loud not to be heard, and too decisive to be misunderstood. The people are all but unanimous in support of the bill; the immense preponderance of county members, and members for populous places who have voted for it, is a sufficient proof of that. If this measure be refused, none other will be accepted; none less would, if accepted, be satisfactory. Do not, I beg, flatter yourselves that it is possible by a less effective measure than this to quiet the storm which will rage, and to govern the agitation which will have been produced. I certainly deprecate popular violence. As a citizen of a free State, and feeling that freedom is essentially connected with order, I deprecate it. As a member of the Government it is my duty to maintain tranquillity; but as a citizen, as a member of the Government, as a man and a statesman, I am bound to look at the consequences which may flow from rejecting the measure. And although I do not say, as the noble Duke (Wellington) did on another occasion, that the rejection of this measure will lead to civil war—*I trust it will not produce any such effect*—yet I see such consequences likely to arise from it as make me tremble for the security of this House and of this country. Upon your lordships, then, as you value the tranquillity and prosperity of the country, I earnestly call to consider well before you reject this measure.[1]

[1] Mirror of Parliament, 1831, 2604; Parl. Deb. vii. 965, 966.

" Let me respectfully entreat the right reverend prelates to consider that, if this bill be rejected by a narrow majority of the lay peers, and its fate should thus be decided, within a few votes, by the votes of the heads of the Church, what will then be their situation with the country. You have shown that you are not indifferent or inattentive to the signs of the times. You have introduced, in the way in which all such measures ought to be introduced by the heads of the Church, measures of meli-

80. Concluded.

oration. In this you have acted with a prudent forethought. You appear to have felt that the eyes of the country were upon you; *that it is necessary to put your house in order*, and prepare for the coming storm. I implore you to follow on this occasion the same prudent course. There are many questions at present which may take a fatal direction, if, upon a measure on which the nation has fixed its hopes, and which is necessary for its welfare, the decision of this House should, by means of their votes, be in opposition to the feelings and wishes of the people. You are the ministers of peace; earnestly do I hope that the result of your votes may be such as will tend to the peace, tranquillity, and happiness of the country."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. vii. 967, 968.

81. Bill thrown out by a majority of forty-one.

The debate elicited talent of the very highest order on both sides; and Lord Harrowby in particular, on the second night, made the best speech which had yet been delivered in either House against the bill.[2] The closing night of the debate brought the two great champions on the opposite sides—Lord Brougham and Lord Lyndhurst—into the lists, whose speeches, as might have been expected, embraced everything which could be urged on either side, and were masterpieces of forensic power and eloquence. The former said, "By all you hold most dear—by all the ties that bind every one of us to one common order, and one common country,—I solemnly adjure you—I warn you—I implore you—on my bended knees I supplicate you—reject not this bill." The latter said, "Perilous as the situation is in which we are placed, it is at the same time a proud one; the eyes of the country are anxiously turned upon us, and if we decide as becomes us, we shall merit the eternal gratitude of every friend of the constitution and of the British empire." On a division, which took place at half-past six, the bill was lost by a majority of 41—the numbers being 199 to 158.[3]

[2] Parl. Deb. vii. 1146, 1175.

[3] Parl. Deb. viii. 275, 276, 299, 340.

This decision, having been long foreseen, took no one

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by surprise; and the reforming party, both in and out of Parliament, adopted immediate measures to obviate its effects. The Funds suddenly fell, many of the shops were closed in London, and that general anxiety was felt which is so often the precursor of some great public calamity. The King requested Ministers to retain their places, and shape the bill so as to disarm their opponents, being much alarmed at the prospect of an approaching convulsion. On the Monday following, Lord Ebrington, in the House of Commons, moved a vote of confidence in Ministers, which was carried by a majority of 131—the numbers being 329 to 198.* This vote enabled the Ministers to retain their places; and the parliamentary contest, for the present at least, being now over, the King, on 20th October, prorogued Parliament in person, with these significant words: "To the consideration of the important question of the reform of the House of Commons the attention of Parliament must necessarily again be called at the opening of the ensuing session; and you may be assured of my unaltered desire to promote its settlement by such improvements in the representation as may be found necessary for securing to my people the full enjoyment of their rights, which, in combination with those of the other orders of the State, are essential to the support of our free constitution."[1]

82. Vote of confidence in the Commons carried by 131.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1831, 291; Roebuck, ii. 217, 221.

83. Disorders in London and in the country.

The declared resolution of the King and the House of Commons to carry out the principles of reform, however, was not sufficient to allay the apprehensions or calm the passions of the people. In London these ebullitions were confined to the lowest of the populace, whose acts,

* The vote was in these words: "That while this House laments the present state of a bill for introducing a reform into the Commons House of Parliament, in favour of which the opinion of the country stands unequivocally prominent, and which has been matured by discussions the most anxious and the most laborious, it feels itself most imperatively called upon to reassert its firm adherence to the principles and leading provisions of that great measure, and to express its unabated confidence in the integrity, perseverance, and ability of those Ministers who, introducing and conducting it so well, consulted the best interests of the country."—*Ann. Reg.* 1831, p. 278.

however, indicated to what they had been stimulated by the incendiary language so long addressed to them by the reforming journals and the public meetings. The Duke of Wellington, the Duke of Cumberland, and the Marquess of Londonderry were assaulted in the street, and with difficulty rescued by the police and the respectable bystanders from the violence of the mob. The latter Oct. 12. nobleman, whose courage and determination during the whole contest had signalised him for vengeance, was struck senseless from his horse by showers of stones at the gate of the Palace, amidst cries of "Murder him—cut his throat!"[1] Persons respectably dressed, and wearing ribbons round their arms, took the lead on these occasions, gave orders, and, rushing forward from the crowd, led it on, and made way for those who commenced the demolition of the windows of Apsley House.* But alarming as these riots were in the metropolis, they were as nothing to those which occurred in the provinces, where scenes ensued which have affixed a lasting stain on the English character, and proved that, when their passions are thoroughly roused, the people of this country may become as dangerous, and engage in atrocities as frightful, as the worst populace of foreign states.[2]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1831, 280, 281.

[2] Ann. Reg. 1831; Martineau, ii. 46, 47.

84. Great meeting of political unions at Birmingham.

While the bill was yet pending in the House of Lords, a great meeting was called by the Political Union of Birmingham, attended, it was said by the Reformers, by one hundred and fifty thousand, and probably, in truth, by one hundred thousand persons. At this meeting very violent language, as might have been expected, was used, though not more so than was usual on all such occasions at that period.† But it acquired a historic importance from

* See in particular the statements of Mr Trevor and Col. Trench (who followed the crowd which committed the outrages), in the House of Commons on 14th October.—*Ann. Reg.* 1831, pp. 288, 289.

† One of the speakers said: "He declared before God, that if all constitutional modes of obtaining the success of the reform measure failed, he should and would be the first man *to refuse the payment of taxes*, except by a levy upon his goods—(tremendous cheers). I now call upon all those who are prepared to join me in this step to hold up their hands—(an immense forest of hands was

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what followed. The meeting voted an address to the King, setting forth the "awful consequences" which might ensue from the rejection of the bill, their pain at imagining that the House of Lords should be so infatuated as to reject it, and their earnest desire that his Majesty should create as many peers as might be necessary to insure its success. They voted also thanks to Lord Althorpe and Lord John Russell. Both these noblemen acknowledged the compliment with thanks; the latter, in doing so, used the expression which became so celebrated: "I beg to acknowledge, with heartfelt gratitude, the undeserved honour done me by one hundred and fifty thousand of my countrymen. Our prospects are now obscured for a moment, and, I trust, only for a moment. *It is impossible that the whisper of faction should prevail against the voice of the nation.*"[1]

1 Ann. Reg. 1831, 283.

85. Riots at Derby and Nottingham.

Similar meetings, attended by vast multitudes, took place at Liverpool, Birmingham, Glasgow, Newcastle, Edinburgh, and all the great towns, at all of which language the most violent was used, and ensigns the most revolutionary were displayed; while the press, provincial as well as metropolitan, increased every hour in vigour and audacity. To intimidate the Peers was the great object, and acts soon ensued more calculated even than words to produce this effect. At Derby, the mob, as usual, demolished the windows of the anti-Reformers; and some of the ringleaders having been apprehended by the magistrates and put in jail, it was forthwith attacked, the

immediately held up, accompanied by vehement cheering). *I* now call upon you who are not prepared to adopt this course to hold up your hands and signify your dissent—(not a single hand was held up). Mark my words, 'Failing all other constitutional means.'" Another speaker said: "It is said that the reverend fathers in God, the bishops, will oppose this bill: if they do, their fate, which even now is exceedingly doubtful, will be irrevocably sealed. The haughty remnants of the Establishment will be buried in the dust, with a nation's execration for their epitaph: the splendid mitre will fall from the heads of the bishops; their crosses will fall as if from a palsied hand; their robes of lawn may be turned into a garb of mourning, and my Lord Bishop of London may shut up his episcopal palace, and take out a license for a beer-shop."—*Ann. Reg.* 1831, p. 282.

doors forced, and the whole prisoners liberated. At Nottingham the violence was of a still more serious and systematic kind, as the Duke of Newcastle, to whom the castle and great part of the property in the town belonged, had signalised himself by the most decided opposition to the bill. A mob suddenly assembled there, and moved against that venerable pile, once a royal residence, and associated with many of the most memorable events in English history; for it was there that Charles I. unfurled his banner at the commencement of the civil wars. The gates were quickly forced, the building sacked, set on fire, and burnt to the ground. A regiment of hussars having opportunely arrived from Derby, prevented any farther damage being done in the town; but the mob, thirsting for plunder, issued forth into the country, and attacked several houses of noblemen or gentlemen known to entertain anti-reform principles. Among these were those of Lord Middleton and Mr Musters, the latter of which was sacked and pillaged, and his unfortunate lady, driven to seek safety by concealment among the shrubbery bushes on a cold and rainy October evening, lost her life.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1831, 231.

86. Commencement of riots at Bristol. Oct. 29.

These disorders, serious as they were, however, all sunk into insignificance before the riots at Bristol, which were of so dreadful a kind as not only to spread a universal panic over the country, but to affix a dark stain on the English character, and suggest a painful doubt as to its ability to retain its equilibrium in periods of violent political excitement. The occasion, or rather the pretext, for the outbreak, was the appearance of Sir Charles Wetherall, a noted anti-reformer, who, as Recorder of Bristol, with more courage than judgment, made his public entrance into Bristol on the 29th October. He was received by the magistrates with the pomp and respect usually shown to the judicial representatives of royalty on such occasions; but at the same time the cavalcade was followed by a disorderly mob, which, beginning with groans and hisses, soon proceeded to throwing of stones

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and brickbats. The respectable citizens at the commercial rooms received them with three cheers; but this only irritated the rabble, who, when the procession reached the Mansion House, assailed it with missiles of every description. The mayor in vain requested the mob to disperse, and withdrew a portion of the special constables, who were particularly obnoxious to them, in order to appease their fury. This only increased it, and the mob swelled in number and audacity as night approached. The Riot Act was read, but the military were not called in. The consequence was, that the constables were suddenly attacked and driven back, the doors of the building forced, the Mansion House stormed, its whole furniture smashed and pillaged, and the iron palings in front torn up, and put into the hands of the rioters for future mischief. Meanwhile Sir Charles and the magistrates escaped by a back door, and the former left the city. The latter called in the military, and two troops of dragoons, amply sufficient to have arrested the disorders, arrived in the square. But they received at first no orders to act, either from the magistrates or the commanding officer; and the soldiers, not knowing what to do, for some time merely walked their horses through the multitude. Seeing this, the mob proceeded to break the windows of the Council House, and the military then charged, dispersed the crowd, and prevented any farther mischief that night.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1831, 292; Martineau, ii. 48; Hughes, vii. 294; Trial of Bristol Rioters, 28, 29.

87. Frightful disorders.

But the lull was of short duration. Deeming the riot over, the magistrates allowed the dragoons, who were much fatigued, to retire for the night, and the mob made good use of the breathing-time thus afforded them to prepare for ulterior measures. The indecision evinced the preceding evening spread far and wide the conviction that the magistrates would not order the soldiers to act, and that if ordered they would not do so. This belief brought multitudes next day to the expected scene of plunder and intoxication; the bargemen from the adjoining canals flocked in on all sides, and those wild-looking haggard

desperadoes began to appear in the streets, which in all civil convulsions, like the storm-birds to the distressed mariners, betoken coming shipwreck. Thus reinforced, the mob returned in greater numbers on the following morning to the scene of their former violence, broke open and ransacked the cellars of the Mansion House, and soon intoxicated wretches added the fumes of drunkenness to the horrors of the scene. The military were again called in, and a troop of the 14th was soon on the spot; but no magistrate was there to give them orders, and the commanding officer, though the violence was going forward, having no orders from the civil authorities, thought it his duty to abstain from acting, and soon after deemed it best to withdraw his men from the risk of contamination, and moved them to the barracks. They were replaced at the Mansion House by another troop less obnoxious to the people. Upon this the mob cheered loudly, and leaving the Mansion House, where nothing now remained to pillage, dispersed in different bodies over the city.[1]

[1] Martineau, ii. 48; Ann. Reg. 1831; Chron. 175, 176.

88. Immense destruction of property.

The most frightful scene of violence and devastation ensued. One detachment proceeded to the bridewell, where they broke open the doors, liberated the prisoners, who immediately joined them, and set the building on fire; another went to the new jail, which was also forced open, the prisoners liberated, and the building consigned to the flames. The Gloucester county prison shared the same fate, and the chief toll-houses round the town were destroyed. A band next proceeded to the bishop's palace, which was set on fire and totally consumed. The Mansion House shared the same fate; and, not content with this, the rioters set fire to the Custom House, Excise Office, and other buildings in Queen Square, which soon were wrapt in one awful conflagration. An attempt was made to fire the shipping in the docks, but happily repulsed by the vigilance and courage of the seamen. Exclusive of the Mansion House, jails, and other public

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edifices, forty-two private houses and warehouses were burnt, and property to the amount of £500,000 destroyed. Before night, Queen Square and the adjoining streets exhibited the most appalling spectacle. Flames were bursting forth on all sides; the walls of buildings already consumed were falling in every minute, and the square and streets filled with infuriated crowds in the last stage of intoxication, many of whom were lying senseless on the pavement, while not a few perished in the flames which they themselves had raised.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1831, 176, 177; Martineau, ii. 48.

89. The riots are at once suppressed when the military are ordered to act.

While these terrible scenes were going on in the town, the soldiers, *for fear of irritating the people*, had been sent into the country; and the officers and men beheld with speechless agony the whole firmament, on Sunday night, reddened by the flames of the burning city. At length, however, the enormity of the evil worked out its own cure. Orders were sent by the magistrates to the military to return on Monday morning; and under the command of an active and gallant officer (Capt. Wetherall of the 14th) the work was speedily and effectually done. The dragoons charged the rioters with the utmost vigour in all the streets where they were assembled, and in an hour's time the insurrection was quelled. Passing from the extreme of audacity to the most abject terror, the rioters fled in crowds from the sabres of the military, and in many instances, in drunken alarm, precipitated themselves into the burning houses, and perished miserably. On the whole, no less than ninety-four persons were killed and wounded during these disastrous days, who were brought to the public hospitals, and probably a still greater number perished in the burning houses, and were never heard of. Since Lord George Gordon's riots in 1780, no such scenes had disgraced the annals of England.[2]

[2] Ann. Reg. 1831, 294, 295; Chron. 177, 178; Martineau, ii. 48, 49.

This violent outbreak, like many other things when matters have reached the extremity of evil, in the end did good. All classes took the alarm at the terrible conse-

quences which it was now apparent flowed from exciting the passions of the people. It was seen how little security the boasted solidity of the English character afforded, when the cupidity of the populace was excited by the prospect of power or plunder. The trial of the ringleaders, which came on in December, and was presided over by Lord Tenterden, terminated in the conviction of a great number of prisoners, three of whom underwent the last punishment of the law. What was still more material, the facts which came out in evidence as to the committing of the worst acts of incendiarism in presence of the military, but in absence of the magistrates, drew from that venerable judge an exposition of the law on that important point; which amounted to this, that every citizen, armed or unarmed, is entitled to interfere to prevent a felony being committed, or destruction to life or property being effected; that a citizen does not cease to be such by becoming a soldier; and that, although in the general case it is advisable for the military to await the orders of a civil magistrate before they act, yet they are entitled, and even bound to do so, even without such orders, in extreme cases, in defence either of their own lives, or of the lives or property of others.[1] Lastly, these events afforded a decisive proof of the ruinous effects which invariably result from either the magistrates or military officers flinching from their duty in the *commencement* of such disorders, whether from timidity or mistaken humanity. The only course to be adopted in such cases is to let the felonious intent be fairly proved by deeds before giving the orders to act, but when it is so proved, to act at once, and with the utmost vigour. Had this been done at the commencement of the riots, they might have been put down in a few hours. A melancholy, tragedy which closed the Bristol disorders, brought home these truths still more impressively to the public mind. The mayor, and the commanding officer of the district, Colonel Brereton, were both brought to trial for neglect of duty on the occasion.[2] The

90. Good effects of these dreadful scenes.

[1] Per Lord Tenterden, Bristol Rioters' Trial—Leak's Crown Cases.

[2] Ann. Reg. 1831, 13, 14, Chron.; Martineau, ii. 49.

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former was acquitted, as it was proved he had not been adequately supported by the military; but the evidence against the latter proved so overwhelming, that after the fourth day of the trial he committed suicide by shooting himself through the heart.

91. Disturbances in other quarters.

Disturbances of a lesser but very alarming kind took place about the same time in other quarters. At the Bristol riots, it was proved that some of the rioters, when firing the bishop's palace, exclaimed, "We'll soon have every church in England down!" This disposition appeared in attacks on those who had hitherto been the object of most veneration to the English mind. At Croydon the Archbishop of Canterbury was publicly insulted when returning from a Bible meeting. Lord
Nov. 3. Tenterden's carriage was attacked when his lordship was proceeding to Westminster Hall; and Bond Street and Regent Street were kept in alarm by mobs of some thousand persons, which broke the windows of all the respectable shops. At Bath the mob surrounded the inn where the yeomanry were assembled to proceed to Bristol during the riots, thus preventing them getting out, and almost pulled the building down. Serious riots
Nov. 3. took place at Worcester and Coventry, at the latter of which places a mill was burnt down. Finally, to give greater unity to the operations of the different political
Oct. 31. unions, a "National Political Union" was formed in London at a great meeting, Sir Francis Burdett in the
Nov. 7. chair. This Union, a few days after, issued a proclamation, in which, besides demanding annual parliaments, universal suffrage, and vote by ballot, it was stated, "that all property *honestly acquired* is sacred and inviolable; that all men are born equally free, and have certain natural and unalienable rights; that all hereditary distinctions of birth are unnatural, and opposed to the equal rights of man, *and ought to be abolished;* and that they would never be satisfied with any laws which stopped short of these principles." At the same time, an

immense number of staves, having the tricolor flag painted on them, were prepared in the neighbourhood of Bethnal Green; sword-sticks were to be seen in many shops of the metropolis, and the demand for bludgeons was so great that the makers could not supply it. And during the whole recess, Earl Grey's privacy was daily intruded upon by deputations of political unions calling upon him to call Parliament instantly together, and quell the opposition of the factious by a great creation of peers.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1831, 295, 297; Martineau, ii. 51, 52; Hughes, vii. 296.

92. Proclamation against political unions.

However insensible Ministers, in the heat of the reform contest, might be to the signs of the times, they did not escape the penetrating eye of the chief magistrate of the realm. Though not free from foibles, which prevented the higher points of his character from being appreciated, William IV. was by no means destitute of the sagacity and firmness which is inherent in his race. He early conceived the utmost apprehension at the proceedings of the political unions, and daily, and even hourly, called upon his Ministers to check them. He composed and submitted to them a very elaborate memoir on the subject, required from the law officers a statement of the means which the existing law afforded for their suppression, and required his Ministers, if these means were insufficient, to apply to Parliament for additional powers. Thus urged, and having the sacking of Bristol before their eyes, the Ministers at length issued a proclamation against the political unions, which satisfied the King, but was far from checking the proceedings of these audacious bodies. Trusting to the protection of juries, which in the present excited state of the public mind would never, they flattered themselves, convict them, they proceeded unchecked in their measures to overawe and intimidate the Government; and the National Political Union, in derision, ostentatiously placarded the proclamation at the door of the Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand, which was then their headquarters.[2]

Nov. 22.

[2] Roebuck, ii. 219, 220; Ann. Reg. 1831, 296, 298; Martineau, ii. 52, 53.

Parliament met on the 6th December, after this brief

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The new Reform Bill introduced. Dec. 12.

and stormy recess, and the first thing done of course was to bring in a new Reform Bill. It was introduced on the 12th by Lord John Russell in the Lower House, and though the leading principles of the former bill were preserved entire, several alterations in matters of detail were introduced, which afforded a just though transient subject for congratulation and triumph to the Conservative opposition. Lord Chandos's fifty-pound clause for voters in counties was retained, and as this was done with the secret approbation of the Whig leaders, it could not justly be considered as a triumph to their political opponents. But other changes, which had been resisted with the whole influence of Government in the former Parliament, were adopted. The House was restored to its original number of 658, though the former House had been dissolved on that very point. The census of 1831 was adopted as the basis of the disfranchisement, notwithstanding the strenuous efforts made to retain that of 1821; and very considerable changes were made in the distribution of boroughs in the schedule. A change, important in principle, though not very material in its present results, was introduced also in the calculations on which the rule for disfranchising boroughs was framed. This was no longer done by mere numbers, but by *numbers compounded with the amount of assessed taxes paid*,—an obvious improvement, as letting in at least some consideration of property, and which was industriously and correctly worked out by Lieutenant Drummond. Sir Robert Peel made a skilful use of the advantage thus afforded him, and ironically congratulated the new Parliament upon the tribute paid to the *manes* of the old one, by adopting General Gascoigne's amendment.[1]

1 Ann. Reg. 1832, 17, 18; Parl. Deb. xi. 407, 413.

In truth, however, the new bill, though it adopted some of the amendments for which the Opposition had contended in the discussion of the former one, was in reality more democratic than the former one had been. The ten-pound clause, which enfranchised the middle class,

and the schedules A and B, which disfranchised property and the colonies, were retained. The first of these schedules, being that containing boroughs which were to be entirely disfranchised, was kept up at its original amount of fifty-six, and there was no addition to the one hundred and forty-four county members, as proposed by the first bill. Eleven towns were taken from Schedule B, and placed in Schedule C, containing new towns returning two members each. The general result was, that the borough members for England amounted to three hundred and twenty-eight, and the county to one hundred and forty-four, or *considerably less than a half!* Yet did Government still persist in the belief that the landed interest would not be impaired by the change. "The House," said Earl Grey, on introducing the bill into the House of Peers, "know how unfounded must be the alarm of those who thought that the present measure would be fatal to the influence of the landed interest."[1]

94. Increased democratic character of the new bill.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1832, 16, 104; Parl. Deb. xii. 22, 23.

The second reading of the bill was carried by a majority of 136; the numbers being 367 to 231. This was a much larger majority than had yet been obtained on the subject, and demonstrated the progress which the question was making in the public mind. It was strenuously and firmly, though temperately, opposed by Sir R. Peel. "I shall oppose this bill," said he, "to the last, believing as I do that the people are grossly deluded as to the practical benefits to be derived from it; that it is the first step, not directly, to revolution, but to a series of changes which will affect the property and alter the mixed constitution of the country; that it will be fatal to the authority of the House of Lords, and that it will force on a series of farther concessions. I will oppose it to the last, convinced that, though my opposition will be unavailing, it will not be fruitless, because it will in some degree oppose a bar to future concessions. If the whole House were now to join in giving way, it would have less power to resist future concessions. On

95. Division on the bill, and Sir R. Peel's speech against it.

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this ground I take my stand, not opposed to any well-considered reform of any of our institutions which the well-being of the country demands, but opposed to this reform in our constitution, because it tends to root up the feelings of respect towards it which are founded in prejudice perhaps, as well as in higher sources of veneration for all our institutions. I believe that reform will do this, and I will wield all the power that I possess to oppose the gradual progress of that spirit of democracy to which others think we ought gradually to yield; for if we make these concessions, it will only lead to establish the supremacy of that principle. We may, I know, make it supreme; we may be enabled to establish a republic, full, I have no doubt, of energy—not wanting, I have no doubt, in talent—but fatal, in my conscience I believe, to our mixed form of government, and ultimately destructive of all those usages and practices which have long insured to us a large share of peace and prosperity, and which have made and preserved this the proudest kingdom in the annals of the world."[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1832, 43, 44; Parl. Deb. xi. 729, 780.

96. Third reading carried in the Commons by 116, and Lord J. Russell's closing declaration. March 23.

The third reading of the bill was carried, on 23d March, in the Commons, after a very long discussion in committee, by a majority of 116, in a House of 594, being less than the majority on the second reading, but larger by 7 than the final division on the first bill. Lord John Russell closed his arduous task with these remarkable words, which, without doubt, expressed in good faith the opinion of Government regarding the measure: "With respect to the expectations of the Government, I will say that, in proposing this measure, they have not acted lightly; but, after much consideration, they were induced to think, a year ago, that a measure of this kind was necessary, if they would stand between the abuses which they wished to correct and the convulsions they desired to avoid. I am convinced that, if Parliament should refuse to entertain a measure of this nature, they would place in collision that party which, on the one hand, opposed all reform in

the Commons House of Parliament, and that which, on the other, desired a reform extending to universal suffrage. The consequence of this would be, that much blood would be shed in the struggle between the contending parties; and I am perfectly convinced that the British constitution would perish in the conflict. I move, sir, that this bill do now pass."[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xi. 730.

97. General distress in the country, and Mr Hunt's motion regarding it.

Before following the bill to its next stage, and recording the momentous conflict between the Crown and the democracy which ensued in the Upper House, it is necessary to mention two circumstances which occurred at this period, which threw an important light both on the causes that had produced the reform passion, and the effect its gratification was likely to have on the prosperity and welfare of the nation. Before the first half of the year 1831 had passed, all branches of industry in the country had come to be sensibly affected by the consternation which generally prevailed, and the feeling of danger which existed on the part of the holders of property in regard to the security of their possessions. Before the end of the year this feeling had become so strong that enterprise and speculations of all sorts were paralysed, expenditure was generally contracted, and industry of every kind in consequence became depressed to a most alarming degree. Mr Hunt, the Radical member for Preston, brought this under the notice of the House of Commons, by an amendment on the Address, which expressed the feeling of the democratic classes in regard to the remote causes of their distresses.* No one seconded his amendment, and it was negatived

* "That by the present critical and alarming state of our country, when trade and manufactures are reduced to such difficulties *by the withdrawing of, and narrowing the circulation*, without a proportionate reduction of taxation, by which the incomes of all those classes but those who lived upon the taxes are reduced one half in value, the greatest distresses existed; *that these were aggravated by the baleful system called Free Trade*, by which a competition of foreign silks, gloves, and other articles is permitted with our own manufactures; that by these means the people have been driven to desperation and phrenzy; and that to these causes are to be attributed those incendiary proceedings going on in the country."—*Ann. Reg.* 1831, p. 13.

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without a division. Posterity will probably reverse the sentence, as it has already done the unanimous vote of the National Assembly finding Louis XVI. guilty, and come to regard the contraction of the currency, and introduction of Free Trade, to which he referred the whole existing distress, as the real cause of all the convulsions into which the nation had been thrown.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1832, 31.

98. Declining state of the public revenue.

But how insensible soever the House of Commons, during the heat of the reform contest, might be to the real causes which had induced the general distress, and with it the desire for change, its effects were soon brought to light in a form which could neither be overlooked nor mistaken. The revenue exhibited a falling off to a most alarming extent. On October 3d, the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought forward his second budget for the year, the first having been abandoned, as already stated,[2] and he was obliged to admit a very considerable defalcation in the principal articles of revenue. The Customs, in the preceding quarter, had fallen £644,000 below the corresponding quarter in the preceding year, and the Excise, in the same period, no less than £1,909,000. Upon the whole, the Chancellor of the Exchequer estimated the revenue at £47,250,000, and the expenditure at £46,756,000, leaving an apparent excess of income of £500,000 a-year.[3] *

[2] Ante, c. xxii. §§ 103, 104.

[3] Ann. Reg. 1831, 289, 290, and for 1832, 229, 230; App. to Chron.

* The income and expenditure for the year 1831, as actually realised, stood as follows :—

| Income, net. | | Expenditure. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Customs, | £16,516,271 | Interest of Funded Debt, | £24,372,894 |
| Excise, | 16,303,025 | Terminable Annuities, | 3,318,688 |
| Stamps, | 6,947,829 | Interest of Unfunded Debt, | 649,833 |
| Taxes, | 4,864,343 | Civil List, &c., | 1,548,772 |
| Post-office, | 1,530,205 | Army, | 7,216,292 |
| Lesser Payments, | 262,757 | Navy, | 5,689,858 |
| | | Ordnance, | 1,472,944 |
| | £46,424,430 | Miscellaneous, | 2,854,013 |
| | | | £47,123,465 |
| | | Deduct income, net, | 46,424,440 |
| | | Excess of expenditure over income, | £699,025 |

—*Ann. Reg.* 1832, pp. 229, 230. *App. to Chron.*

so far were these expectations from being realised that the total income, deducting the cost of collection from both sides, for the year ending 5th January 1852, was only £46,424,000, and the total expenditure £47,123,000, leaving a deficit of £700,000 a-year, which of course more than extinguished the last remnants of the Sinking Fund.

99. State of Ireland.

Ireland also, before the end of the year, exhibited a most afflicting increase of predial outrage and disorder. Then was seen how utterly fallacious an idea it had been that the exclusion of the Catholics from the legislature had been the real cause of the disturbances of the country, and how little their admission into it had done to remove them. So far from it, their success on the former occasion had only made them more audacious; and the agitators and priests over the whole country had now banded the people together in a general combination for resistance to tithes, which led to the most frightful tragedies. The misery and crimes of the people were daily increasing, and never had this increase been so great as since emancipation had passed. Murder, robbery, searching for arms, were committed in open day, and by such large bodies as set resistance at defiance even by the armed police. In daylight they dug up the potatoes in the fields. Five were shot dead while attacking a house in Tipperary; but this had no effect in deterring from similar outrages. Nine persons were killed during a conflict between the insurgents and police at Castle Pollard, in the county of Westmeath, on the 23d of May. Twelve were killed and twenty wounded during an affray at Newtonbarry, in Wexford, originating in a sale for distraining of tithes. The coroner's jury, after sitting nine days, could arrive at no verdict, six Catholics being on the one side, and six Protestants on the other.[1]

May 23. June 18.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1831, 324, 326.

As winter approached, and the severities of nature were added to the animosities of man, these outrages assumed a still more sombre and alarming character. Payment

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of tithe generally ceased; when it was recovered, it was only by distraining, which generally led to conflicts between the police and peasantry, ending in wounds and death, terminating in still more unseemly struggles for vengeance or impunity in the courts of justice. In the end of November, five of the peasantry were shot dead by the military in a tithe riot, when the latter had been assailed by a band of ruffians; but soon after the insurgents took a bloody revenge. A strong party of police having gone to protect a legal officer employed to serve a tithe notice, the peasantry assembled in multitudes on the road-sides, armed with pitchforks, bludgeons, and scythes, and having closed with the procession of the police, the commanding-officer and twelve of his men were killed. Such was the ferocity of the mob, that they beat out the brains of five of the police, who lay on the ground weltering in their blood, and put to death the captain's son, a boy of ten years of age, who was with the procession, and the pony on which he rode![1]

100. Dreadful tithe outrages in Wexford and Newtonbarry.

Nov. 25.

Dec. 14.

[1] Ann. Reg. 1831, 324, 326, 328.

101. Resolution of the Cabinet to create peers.

While these frightful scenes were going forward, and the country, from one end to the other, was in a state of the most violent excitement, from the dread of yet greater calamities impending over it, the Cabinet were anxiously engaged in the consideration of the all-important question, how the declared hostility of the Peers to the bill was to be overcome. The King had, in the outset of the discussions on the Reform Bill, distinctly declared to his Ministers that he would not dissolve the House of Commons if it should reject the bill, nor create peers if the Upper House did the same. "He had been induced, however," says the Whig historian, "under the mixed influence of vanity and alarm, to dissolve the intractable Parliament of 1830; but he declared he never would consent to any coercion of the Peers by means of creations."[2] The Cabinet, however, distinctly saw that matters had now come to such a point that such a measure was unavoidable, to avoid a rejection of the bill; and

[2] Roebuck, ii. 223.

great division of opinion existed in the Ministry on the subject. Lord Brougham and Lord Durham strenuously supported the measure, which they represented as unavoidable, and even urged a creation of sixty, to neutralise an anticipated majority to that amount. Lord Grey, on the other hand, manifested the utmost repugnance, and declared that he could never bring himself to acquiesce in any such unconstitutional measure. Lord Durham combated Earl Grey's objections in a written memoir, dated in January 1832; and Sir James Graham recommended the creation of a small batch of peers in the first instance, to show that Government were determined, and had the power to enforce their determination. The discussions in the Cabinet were long and anxious; and when Parliament met, on 6th December, no decision was arrived at on the subject. It was not till the first week of January 1832 that the repugnance of Lord Grey was overcome; and a majority of the Cabinet had resolved to present the creations to the King as a Cabinet measure.[1]

[1] Roebuck, ii. 223, 224.

102. The King is violently agitated, and reluctantly consents.

Meanwhile the King, who also foresaw that the matter would ultimately come to his decision, was in a state of the utmost anxiety and agitation, and he repeatedly and vehemently declared that he considered a creation of peers a revolutionary proceeding, and tending directly to the destruction of the House of Lords. It was on the 1st January, for the first time, that the majority of the Cabinet was brought round to the creation of peers, and on the 3d of the same month, after a long conference with Earl Grey, he was, with great reluctance, induced to give his consent to "the measure of *peer-making*," as he termed it, if, on reflection, the Cabinet should remain of opinion that it was absolutely unavoidable; but, to be satisfied of that, he required all the members of the Cabinet to give him their opinion *in writing*; adding at the same time, that nothing but the most stern necessity would induce him to consent to so *fatal* a measure, and that, if done at all, he would prefer doing it at once to proceeding by

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successive small creations. He insisted, also, that the new peerages, with the exception of two, or at most three, should be in favour either of the eldest sons or heirs-presumptive of peers, and he expressed a hope that twenty-one might be sufficient. These conditions he said he considered essential to the preservation of the *hereditary* character of the peerage, and he expressed the utmost alarm at the revolutionary spirit which was abroad in the country, and entreated his Ministers, in the most earnest manner, to do everything in their power to check and restrain it.[1]

[1] Roebuck, ii. 226, 227, note.

103. Secret negotiations with the waverers.

In the mean time a negotiation was secretly commenced, through Sir Herbert Taylor, the King's private secretary, between his Majesty and some of the Opposition peers, particularly Lord Wharncliffe and Lord Harrowby, the object of which was to induce them to vote for the second reading of the bill as a matter of absolute necessity, and in the hope of effecting some important improvements upon it in committee. The fixed opinion of the King, which he expressed on all occasions, was, that a large measure of reform had become indispensable, but that a creation of peers to effect it would give an irremediable wound to the constitution, and that every possible effort should be made to avert so dire an alternative. The influence of his Majesty, as well as the obvious reason of the thing, had a decisive effect upon a considerable number of peers, respectable alike by their talents and their position, and the result appeared in the vote which followed, though it did not avert the catastrophe which was apprehended. Indeed, to any one who calmly considers the circumstances of the British empire at this period, it must be evident that the view taken by the King and these peers was well founded, and that there was now no alternative between an extensive reform and revolution.[2] The nation had been worked up to such a pitch by the long dependence of the question and the efforts of the press, that it had become altogether ungovernable, and it

[2] Martineau, ii. 56, 57; Ann. Reg. 1832, 100, 102; Roebuck, ii. 259.

had determined upon a change, which, for good or for evil, must be conceded. "A majority," says Roebuck, "of the wealthy, intelligent, and instructed, as well as the poor and laborious millions, had now resolved to have the Reform Bill. They had resolved to have it, if possible, by peaceable means, but, if that were not possible, BY FORCE."

104. Revolutionary meetings to coerce the Peers.

Decisive proof of this ungovernable and revolutionary spirit speedily appeared during the three weeks which immediately preceded the second reading of the bill in the Upper House. The political unions and Radicals turned the Easter recess to good account in the furtherance of agitation to overawe and coerce the House of Peers. The assembly of numbers made, and violence of the speeches delivered at the meetings which they called in all the great towns, much exceeded anything witnessed even during the earlier stages of this disastrous contest. Everything breathed approaching civil war. Argument or persuasion was little thought of: threats, denunciations of vengeance, predictions of approaching and prepared rebellion, formed the staple of the harangues. The great object was to make as imposing as possible a display of numbers and physical strength, and certainly the multitudes assembled did give fearful evidence of the extent to which the passions of the people had at length come to be stirred. At Liverpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Manchester, Leeds, Paisley, Sheffield, and all the great towns, meetings attended by thirty thousand or forty thousand persons were held, at which the most violent language was used, and the most revolutionary ensigns were exhibited. Charles X., from his windows in Holyrood, gazed on a scene in the King's Park of Edinburgh which recalled the opening events of the French Revolution; and a speaker at Newcastle reminded the Sovereign that a "fairer head than that of Adelaide had ere this rolled on the scaffold." The object of all these petitions and speeches was the same—to induce the Lords, by threats of revolution, to

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pass the bill, and the King by similar threats to create peers sufficient to coerce them if they refused to do so. The National Union, on 3d May, spoke the voice of all the unions when it said that there was reason to expect that, if the Lords denied or impaired the bill, "the payment of taxes would cease, the other obligations of society would be disregarded, and the ultimate consequence might be the extinction of the privileged orders."[1]

1832. May 3. [1] Martineau, ii. 56, 57; Ann. Reg. 1832, 170, 171; Personal knowledge.

105. Second reading of the bill carried by a majority of nine. April 13.

Amidst this tumult and anarchy the second reading of the bill came on in the House of Peers. The debate commenced on the 9th, and was not concluded till seven o'clock on the morning of the 13th, when it was carried by a majority of NINE. The solicitations of the King, the threats of the people, had not been without their effects. Seventeen peers had changed their vote; twelve, who had formerly been absent, now appeared, and voted for the bill; ten, who had voted against it, were now absent. Among the twelve were the Archbishop of York, and the Bishops of London, St David's, Worcester, and Chester. "It was the bishops," says the liberal historian, "who saved the bill this time, but this deed did not restore the credit they had lost in October."[2] It never does so: concession to democracy never either satisfies its desires or commands its esteem. It is ascribed to fear, and that generates nothing but contempt.[3]

[2] Martineau, ii. 57.

[3] Parl. Deb. xii. 454.

106. Lord Lyndhurst's amendment carried by thirty-five.

It soon appeared, however, that the object of this defection had been to meet the wishes of the Sovereign, or avert the wrath of the people, but by no means to pass the bill entire in obedience to the mandates of either. On May 7, when Parliament met after the recess, and when a meeting of not less than one hundred thousand persons was held in Birmingham, Lord Lyndhurst proposed in committee to defer the consideration of the disfranchising clauses in the bill till the enfranchising clauses had been considered. "Begin," said he, "by enfranchising, by conferring rights and privileges, by granting boons and favours, and not by depriving a por-

tion of the community of the privileges which they at present enjoy." "Should this amendment be carried," said Earl Grey, in reply, "it may be necessary for me to consider what course I shall take. I dread the effect of the House of Lords opposing itself as an insurmountable barrier to what the people think necessary for the good government of the country." The House being in committee, proxies could not be taken, and, after an angry debate, the amendment was carried by a majority of 35 —the numbers being 151 to 116.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xii. 717, 718.

107. Ministers resign, and their resignation is accepted. May 9.

Ministers next day held a cabinet council, at which it was resolved to resign unless the King would give them power to create a number of peers sufficient to give them such a working majority as might be necessary to carry the bill unimpaired in its leading provisions. The King refused to do so, and the Ministers immediately tendered their resignations, which were accepted. Lord Althorpe made this announcement in the House of Commons on the 9th, and Lord Grey did the same in the House of Lords. Matters had now come to the crisis which had long been foreseen on both sides. The Crown and the House of Lords had taken their stand to resist the bill, the Commons to force it upon them. When Charles I. planted his standard at Nottingham the crisis was scarcely more violent, nor the dreadful alternative of civil war to all appearance more imminent.[2]

[2] Parl. Deb. xii. 787; Roebuck, ii. 231, 232; Martineau, ii. 59, 60.

108. The King sends for the Duke of Wellington to form a ministry.

In this extremity the King applied to his former Chancellor, Lord Lyndhurst, who advised his Majesty to send for the Duke of Wellington. The old soldier at once obeyed the perilous summons. "I should have been ashamed," said he, "to show my face in the streets, if I had refused to assist my Sovereign in the distressing circumstances in which he was placed." The King frankly stated to the Duke of Wellington that, in his opinion, a large measure of reform was necessary; and the Duke, though strongly of opinion that such a measure was unnecessary, consented to assist the King in forming an ad-

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ministration on this basis; but he declined the situation of Premier, or indeed any situation in the Cabinet, for himself. Sir R. Peel, to whom the premiership was offered, at once refused it, saying, that "no authority nor example of any man or number of men could shake his determination not to accept office upon such conditions." Upon this determination being reported to the King, the Duke, at his request, immediately agreed to accept the perilous post of prime-minister. Mr Manners Sutton was to be leader of the House of Commons; Mr Baring, Chancellor of the Exchequer; and Lord Lyndhurst, Chancellor; and for the next five days the Duke was busily engaged in endeavouring to form an administration.[1]

[1] Mirror of Parliament, 1832, 2074; Roebuck, ii. 285, 286; Parl. Deb. xii. 997, 107.

109. Vehement excitement in the country.

No sooner was the resignation of the Ministry known, and that the King had sent for Lord Lyndhurst and the Duke of Wellington, than a storm arose in the country more violent than any which had been yet experienced, and which demonstrated how well founded was the opinion of the King that an extensive measure of reform had now become necessary. Meetings were called in all the great towns, at which the most violent language was used; and insurrection was openly threatened if the bill was not instantly carried, and the late Ministry restored to office. Non-payment of taxes was universally recommended, and this not merely by the leaders of political unions, but by some of the greatest and proudest magnates of the land. Lord Milton, now Earl Fitzwilliam, desired the tax-gatherer who called upon him at this time, to call again a week after, as "he was not certain that circumstances might not arise which would oblige him to resist the payment." The Sovereign, so recently the object of the most fulsome flattery, could no longer show himself in public without being insulted.[2]* The Queen, to whose influence the change was generally ascribed, was the victim

[2] Mirror of Parliament, 1832, 2456.

* "At a quarter past twelve the royal carriage reached Hounslow, where a strong guard of honour of the 9th lancers joined the royal carriage, in which was the King and Queen. The postilions passed on at a rapid rate, and on

of general abuse, and the public meetings often ended with "three groans for the Queen." * Then were seen the infernal placards in the streets of London, "To stop the Duke, go for gold;" and with such success was the suggestion adopted, that in three days no less than £1,800,000 was drawn out of the Bank of England in specie. In Manchester, placards appeared in the windows, "Notice — No taxes paid till the Reform Bill is passed;" and a petition, signed by 25,000 persons, was speedily got up, calling on the Commons to stop the supplies till this was done. The Common Council of London petitioned the House of Commons to the same effect. Attempts were made to seduce some privates of the Scots Greys, then stationed at Birmingham. In a word, Great Britain was on the verge of a civil war; the leaders of the political unions were quite prepared to embark in it; and although it is not yet known how far these frantic designs were countenanced by persons in authority, it was proved at the trial of Smith O'Brien, in 1848, that, at this period, questions of a very sinister kind were put to a distinguished officer at Manchester by a person in the confidence of a late cabinet minister.[1] †

[1] Roebuck, ii. 291, 292; Martineau, ii. 65, 66; Ann. Reg. 1832, 172, 173.

entering the town of Brentford, the people, who had assembled in great numbers, began to groan, hiss, and make the most tremendous noises that can be imagined. The escort kept behind and close to the carriage-windows, or in all probability mischief would have ensued, as we were told a number of clots of dirt were hurled at the carriage. Along the road to London the people expressed their feelings in a similar manner; and when the carriage entered the Park, the mob saluted their Majesties with yells and execrations of every description, which we refrain from publishing."—*Sun*, May 12, 1832.

* "Mr Hume told the multitude, 'that there were 150 peers against them, but he did not know how many women, though he had heard there were some' —an allusion which was immediately followed by 'three groans for the Queen; and her Majesty shortly after, while taking an airing, was grossly insulted by the populace."—*Ann. Reg.* 1832, p. 172.

† The petition from Birmingham bore: "Your petitioners find it declared, 'that the people of England may have arms for their defence suitable to their condition, and as allowed by law; and your petitioners apprehend that this right will be put in force generally, and that the whole of the people of England will *think it necessary to have arms for their defence, in order that they may be prepared for any circumstances which may arise.* Your petitioners, therefore, pray your honourable House forthwith to present a petition to his Majesty not to allow the resignation of his Ministers, but instantly to create a sufficient

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110. The Duke fails in forming an Administration.

Great as were the difficulties in the way of the formation of a new administration, from this vehement excitement of the public mind, it was not these which caused the attempt to fail. The insurmountable obstacles were found in the division of opinion which prevailed among those who would necessarily form the new Cabinet, on the subject of reform. The courage of the Duke was equal to the emergency, and he showed that he was willing to brave all the dangers, and incur all the obloquy consequent on accepting office, on condition of carrying through an extensive measure of reform, rather than desert his Sovereign on this crisis. Sir R. Peel, on the other hand, who was sensitively alive to the danger of change of conduct, felt "that, if he was now to carry a measure to which he had on principle given a most decided opposition, and which he had declared to be dangerous to the existence of our monarchical institutions and to the peace of the country, he might obtain power at the moment, but he would ruin himself in the estimation of the judicious, the honest, and the instructed portion of his countrymen. He saw clearly, from the excitement which the retirement of Lord Grey created, that the Reform Bill must be carried; and he was desirous, for many reasons, that it should become law under the auspices of its authors and original proposers."[1] These were the sentiments of the great majority of his followers, and the consequence was that the negotiation failed; and on the 17th it was announced in the House of Commons, that

[1] Parl. Deb. xii. 1073, 1074; Roebuck, ii. 286; Ann. Reg. 1832, 175.

number of peers to insure the carrying of the bill of reform unimpaired into a law; and that your honourable House *will instantly withhold all supplies*, and adopt any other measures whatever which may be necessary to carry the bill of reform, and to insure the safety and liberty of the country."—*Birmingham Petition*, May 12, 1832; *Ann. Reg.* 1832, p. 172.

"The political unions everywhere began to organise their members *for actual insurrection*. Meetings in London were held by day and by night, at which the most violent language was employed, not by unknown or inferior persons, but by men of rank and substance."—ROEBUCK, vol. ii. p. 291; and *Mirror of Parl.*, 1832, p. 245.

the commission granted to the Duke of Wellington had failed.

Meanwhile the Commons had not been idle. On the very night when Lord Althorpe announced Earl Grey's resignation, Lord Ebrington moved for a call of the House, and an address to his Majesty on the present state of public affairs. The motion was resisted by the whole strength of the Tories, and carried by a majority of 80 only—the numbers being 288 to 208. This majority, though sufficiently large to insure the creation of peers and the forcing through of the bill, was a considerable falling off from that which formerly supported Ministers, for on the third reading of the last Reform Bill the majority had been 139. This change, though mainly owing to their own violence and threats of revolution, excited no small indignation and some alarm in the minds of the Reformers, and a rigid inquiry was instituted into the conduct of every defaulter, with a view to excluding him from the next Parliament. The debate was characterised by extreme violence rather than great ability, and the passions on both sides were so strongly roused as to exclude the reason. Among the rest, Mr Macaulay said, "The new Ministry will go forth to the contest without arms, either offensive or defensive. If they have recourse to force, they will find it vain; if they attempt gagging bills, they will be divided; in short, in taking office they will present a most miserable example of impotent ambition, and appear as if they wished to show to the world a melancholy example of *little men* bringing a great empire to destruction." A curious proof of excitement, as Mr Roebuck remarks, when we recollect that among these little men "the Duke of Wellington was numbered."[1] *

111. Lord Ebrington's motion in the House of Commons carried by eighty.

[1] Parl. Deb. xii. 856, 857; Roebuck, ii. 305; Ann. Reg. 1832, 184, 185.

* The violence of the public press at this period was such as, in more calm and happier times, appears scarcely credible. Take, for example, the *Times* of May 14, 1832: "But of the multitudinous feelings produced by this temporary

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112. The King submits, and gives authority to create peers.

All was now accomplished. The King, at the eleventh hour, had made an effort to assert the independence of the Crown, and avert the degradation of the House of Peers, but without success. A large majority of the House of Commons had supported the Whigs in their attempt to force the two other branches of the legislature, and nothing remained to the Sovereign but submission. The only resource competent to a constitutional monarch in such a crisis—that of appealing to the people—was sure to fail in this instance. In the excited state of the public mind, a still larger majority in favour of the bill would inevitably be returned. The King saw the necessity of his situation, and yielded, as by the spirit of the constitution he was bound to do. Earl Grey and his Cabinet were reinstated in office, on a permission given in writing that they might create as many peers as might be necessary to secure a majority in the House of Lords. The reluctance of the King was painfully manifest, but he had no alternative, and the decisive paper was given to the Lord-Chancellor, who, with Earl Grey* and Sir Herbert Taylor, were alone present at this memorable interview.[1] All stood but the Sovereign the

May 17.

[1] Roebuck, ii. 331, 337.

overthrow of a nation's confidence, there is none so active or so general as that of astonishment at the individual who it is now notorious has tripped up the heels of Lord Grey. What, the Duke of Wellington! The commander-in-chief of all the ultra-anti-reformers in the kingdom now offers himself as Minister—nay, has for some months been making fierce love to the office, with a full and undisguised resolution to bring in with his own hands a 'strong and satisfactory' reform bill! There may be dexterity in such conduct—there may be generalship—there may be food for incontinent exultation and chuckling at Apsley House; but it affords evidence also of more ignoble faction, of *a lust for office more sordid and execrable*, of a meanness of inconsistency more humiliating and more shameful, than we had even suspected the Duke of Wellington of being capable of affixing to his own political character. As for success in such a course of imposture, it is, let us once for all warn his Grace, hopeless." It is curious to contrast this passage with the just and splendid eulogium on the Duke in the columns of the same journal twenty years afterwards, on occasion of his death.

* It was in these terms: "The King grants permission to Earl Grey and to his Chancellor, Lord Brougham, to create such a number of peers as will be sufficient to insure the passing of the Reform Bill—first calling up peers' eldest sons. WILLIAM R. Windsor, May 17, 1832."—ROEBUCK, vol. ii. p. 331, note.

whole time—a thing unprecedented with that courteous monarch.*

Still solicitous to avert, if possible, the dire alternative of a creation of peers, the King, as a last resource, requested his private secretary to write a circular letter to the leading peers, requesting them to stay away from the House of Peers and allow the bill to pass.† This expedient had the desired effect. It could not throw a veil over the coercion of the Upper House, but it prevented the evil of that coercion being rendered permanent by the introduction of a permanent body of men, who might keep on the fetters in all future time. The practical good sense of the Duke of Wellington at once saw that matters had come to such a crisis that one or other of these evils must be incurred, and he wisely adopted the least of the two. Though feeling, as he himself said, that yielding to a threat to create peers was as much a violation of the constitution as such a creation itself, he bowed to necessity, and rose and left the House, followed by above a hundred peers, none of whom appeared there again till after the bill was carried.[1]

113. The King's circular to the Opposition peers to leave the House of Peers. May 17.

[1] Parl. Deb. xii. 1012, 1015; Ann. Reg. 1832, 183; Roebuck, ii. 336.

Lord Grey and Lord Brougham are said to have afterwards declared that, if the Opposition peers had stood firm, the Reform Bill and their Administration would have both been defeated, as they would probably not

* "The excitement, anger, and hurt pride of the King at this memorable interview were very evident, and marked by unusual circumstances. The one was, that he kept Lord Grey and the Chancellor both standing the whole time; the other, that Sir Herbert Taylor was kept in the room. The Chancellor's asking for a written promise Earl Grey deemed harsh and uncalled for: 'I wonder,' said he, as soon as they left the presence, 'how you could have the heart to press it, when you saw the state he was in.' The Chancellor replied, 'You will see reason to think I was right.'"—ROEBUCK, vol. ii. p. 333.

"ST JAMES'S PALACE, *May* 17, 1832.

† "MY DEAR LORD,—I am honoured with his Majesty's commands to acquaint your lordship that all difficulties in the arrangements in progress will be obviated by a declaration to-night from a sufficient numbers of peers, that in consequence of the present state of affairs they have come to the resolution of dropping their farther opposition to the Reform Bill, so that it may pass without delay, and as nearly as possible in its present state.—I have the honour to be, yours sincerely, HERBERT TAYLOR."

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114. Reflections on this event, and on the act. [1] Roebuck, ii. 335, 336.

have exacted from the King his promise to create peers.[1] If they have really said so, it only proves how ignorant they both were of the force of the current which they themselves had put in motion. It was impossible to prevent the bill then being carried; the excitement of the nation was such, that victory to the Reform party, or a bloody civil war, in the course of which, whatever side ultimately prevailed, the constitution would have perished, were the only alternatives left. The Whig annalist has, with more truth and justice, described the state of the country at this crisis in the following words, which all who recollect the period must feel to be just: "The violence of the language employed by persons intimately connected with the Whig chiefs, the furious proposals of the newspapers known to speak the sentiments and wishes of the Cabinet, all conspired to make the country believe that, if an insurrection were to break out, it would be headed by the Whig leaders, and sanctioned by the general acquiescence of the immense majority of the Whig party. The consequence was, that a very large proportion of the more ardent Reformers throughout the country were prepared to resist, and civil war was, in fact, thus rendered far more probable than was ever really intended by those who were using the popular excitement as a means whereby they were to be reinstated in office.* Had the Opposition peers stood firm, and had Lord Grey retired without having exercised the power confided to him by the King, the Whig party would at once and for ever have been set aside; a bolder race of politicians would have taken the lead of the people, civil war would have been dared, and the House of Lords, possibly the throne itself, would have been swept away in the tempest that would thus

* "That the chief members of the Whig administration ever intended to proceed to illegal extremities no one can for a moment imagine; but that the conduct of their friends led the reforming world to think of, and prepare for armed resistance, is beyond a doubt."—ROEBUCK, vol. ii. p. 311, note.

have been raised. Fortunately for the fame of Lord Grey and the Chancellor, fortunately for the happiness of England, the practical good sense of the Duke of Wellington extricated the nation from the terrible difficulty into which the Administration and the House of Lords had brought it."[1]

[1] Roebuck, ii. 311, 335, 336.

115. The bill passes both Houses, and receives the royal assent. June 7.

The resistance of the House of Peers being thus overcome, the bill proceeded at a rapid rate through its remaining stages in both Houses. Its passage through the Peers was not in form mere dumb show, but in effect it was so. A trifling minority, reduced now to twenty or thirty members, suggested a few inconsiderable amendments of no consequence, which were adopted by the Peers. The third reading in that House was carried by a majority of 84; the numbers being 106 to 22. Persevering to the last in his amiable illusion as to the real tendency of the measure, Earl Grey's last words on the subject were, "I trust that those who augured unfavourably of the bill will live to see all their ominous forebodings falsified, and that, after the angry feelings of the day have passed away, the measure will be found to be, in the best sense of the word, *conservative of the constitution.*" Next day the Commons agreed to the amendments of the Lords, and the day after, June 7, the bill became law, and the British constitution was essentially and permanently changed. From being a mixed constitution, in which all classes were directly or indirectly represented, it became what may be called a *Poligarchy*, in which supreme power was lodged in a section of the community, numerous, indeed, but belonging only to one class in the state. The royal assent was given by commission; the commissioners being, the Lord-Chancellor, Lord Wellesley, Lord Lansdowne, Earl Grey, and Lords Holland and Durham.[2] The King was vehemently urged by his Ministers to give his assent in person, the well-known sign of the measure having met with the royal approbation; but he positively refused. "The question," said he,

[2] Parl. Deb. xiii. 374; Ann. Reg. 1832, 194; Roebuck, ii. 337, 355; Martineau, ii. 67.

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" was one of feeling, not of duty ; and as a sovereign and a gentleman he was bound to refuse."

116. The Scotch and Irish bills passed.

As the English Reform Bill was the trial of strength between the two great parties into which the State was divided, so its passing was the turning-point between the old and the new constitution. But it was immediately followed by two other measures which, in their ultimate result, was still more decisive of the future policy and social condition of Great Britain. These were the Scotch and Irish Reform Bills. They were quickly brought forward, and carried by large majorities in both Houses. The Scotch bill increased the members for that portion of the empire from forty-five to fifty-three, and gave two members to Edinburgh and Glasgow, and one to Paisley, Aberdeen, Perth, and Dundee. But the great change made was in the class of electors both in burghs and counties ; and this was so great as to amount to a total revolution. The number of members for Ireland was increased to a hundred and five ; but the constituency, both in boroughs and counties, was entirely altered, and placed in harmony with the English Reform Bill. Mr O'Connell made great efforts to get the 40s. freeholders, disfranchised by the Relief Bill, restored to their electoral privileges; alleging, with great plausibility, that the object of the Reform Bill being to give the same political rights to the two islands, there was no reason why the 40s. freeholders of Ireland should be denied a privilege which those of England enjoyed. But the proposal was resisted by Government ; and the bill, making the county franchise a £10 interest in a freehold, or a £50 rent, passed both Houses by large majorities.[1]

[1] Mirror of Parliament, 1832, iii. 2537; Roebuck, ii. 357, 365; Ann. Reg. 1832, 204, 206.

117. Vast effects of the reform in Scotland and Ireland.

The change thus introduced into the Scotch and Irish representation has proved more important in its ultimate effects than even that made in England. In the latter country the alteration was great, but not entire ; a large number of the old boroughs remained, the existing freemen and freeholders were preserved, and though many

new and important interests were let in to the representation, the old ones were not extirpated. But in Scotland and Ireland the case has been far otherwise; in them the revolution has been complete. Not only have new interests and classes of society been let in to the constituency, but the old ones, in whom the power was formerly vested, have been practically disfranchised. There has been no amalgamation of constituencies, but an entire substitution of one for another. The old town-councils in Scotland, in great part self-elected, have been succeeded by a host of ten-pound shopkeepers and householders, actuated by different interests, and swayed by different influences.

118. Its lasting and important effects.

The old parchment freeholders, who followed their directing magnate to the poll in Scotland, have been succeeded by a multitude of independent feuars in villages and tenants in rural districts, influenced in many cases by entirely different interests and views. The boroughs in Ireland, which James I. planted in the soil to be a barrier against the Roman Catholics, have been turned, by the change of the constituency, into so many strongholds of Romish influence; the ten-pound freeholders, whom the Protestant landlords multiplied in such numbers to give them the command of the county elections, have become a vast army, officered by Romish priests, and guided by Romish influence. The consequences have been great, lasting, and decisive. So strong are old interests and traditionary influences in England, and so comparatively small the change in the representation there made, that within five years of the passing of the Reform Bill the Conservatives had recovered their majority in the English members. But they never have been able to shake the steady liberal majority against them in Scotland and Ireland; and in the decisive divisions in November 1852, which turned out Lord Derby's Administration, of the English members a majority of fourteen were on the Conservative side; of the English and Irish, taken

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together, a majority of five on the same side; but of English, Irish, and Scotch, a majority of twenty-one on the liberal.

119. General results of the Reform Bill on the Imperial Parliament.

In its final and general result the Reform Bill has thus arranged the imperial legislature. In England, the county constituencies, which formerly had been 52, returning 94 members, were increased to 82, returning 159 members. In Ireland, five members were added; there was no change in the constituencies, but a great one in the voters composing them. In Scotland, the number of burgh members was raised from 15 to 23; the county members remain at their original level of 30. Every one of these burgh members, till within the last three years, when Airdrie, from powerful local influence, became an exception, has been in the liberal interest—a vast change, for formerly the whole fifteen Scotch burgh members were on the Tory side. Thus in the imperial legislature, as it now stands, there are 253 county members, and 405 for boroughs; an immense disproportion, when it is recollected that they are nearly in the *inverse ratio of the population and wealth* raised by these different classes of society, three-fifths of both of which are drawn from, or dependent on, the rural inhabitants.* Earl Grey and the authors of the Reform Bill were perfectly aware of this disproportion; but what they trusted to to correct it, was the belief, which they maintained to the very last, that the great majority of the borough members would be in the landed interest, and, in fact, returned by the adjacent territorial magnates.† The subsequent divi-

| | County. | Borough. | Total. |
|---|---|---|---|
| * Viz.—England, | 159 | 341 | 500 |
| Scotland, | 30 | 23 | 53 |
| Ireland, | 64 | 41 | 105 |
| | 253 | 405 | 658 |

—*Political Dictionary*, i. 585.

† "How stands the argument with respect to the agricultural interest? I am prepared to contend that the 144 county members of England will belong to that interest, and that of the 264 old borough members, there will be *as large a proportion as ever in favour of the landed proprietors.* There only re-

sion on the Corn Laws affords a curious commentary on this prediction; a memorable instance of the revolutionising of a state by persons in entire ignorance of the practical effect of their own measures.

120. Reflections on this change in the Constitution of England, as affecting our external relations.

Such was the termination of the old Constitution of England. Thus did the great Revolution of the eighteenth century reach and triumph over "even the greatest, the most powerful, and the most persevering of its enemies." As such, the change of 1832 is an event of paramount importance in English, second only to that of 1789 in France, in European history. More even than the revolt of Sièyes and Mirabeau has it modified the external relations and changed the foreign policy of the European states, for France always was a great military power, passionately bent on foreign aggrandisement, and the conquests of the Revolution were only the realisation, by the aid of popular strength, of what had been the dream of the Gauls since the days of Brennus. But the Reform Bill has entirely altered the foreign policy and position in the European balance of Great Britain. It has converted the chief Conservative into the leader of the Liberal powers, and brought the strength of England, not into the career of military conquest, but into that of social change and democratic ascendancy. And of the magnitude of the change which this Revolution has made in European relations, no stronger proof can be given than is afforded by the fact, that England and France are now united in a cordial alliance against Russia, the former enemy of the one and ally of the other; that their standards, for the first time since the Crusades, have appeared at Constantinople, not to overthrow, but to uphold the religion of Mahomet; that they have waved in

main, then, the sixty-four new members, and even should the whole of these fall to the lot of the manufacturing and commercial interests, it will be *a share* to which those interests will be justly entitled."—*Lord Grey's words*, April 9, 1832; *Parl. Deb.*, vol. xii. p. 23.

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triumph over the fields of the Alma and Inkermann in the scenes immortalised by the genius of ancient Greece, and repelled the hordes of the modern Scythians in the regions where the victorious Goths poured into the decaying provinces of the Roman empire.

121. And as affecting our internal and social state.

The influence of the English revolution appears still more conspicuously in the social state, colonial growth, and what may be called pacific conquests of the Anglo-Saxon race. Whatever difference of opinion may exist in other respects, one thing will admit of no doubt, that it has immensely extended the *outward* tendency of the British people. As such it will be for ever memorable, and should be particularly noticed as marking the turning-point in English annals, when a series of causes and effects came into operation, destined ere long to arrest the multiplication of the Anglo-Saxon race in these Islands, and effect a mighty transposition of it to the Southern and Western Hemispheres. When we recollect that the annual emigration from the British Islands, for seven years prior to 1832, was from twenty to forty thousand a-year, and that it is now not less, on an average of years, than 350,000,* it is evident that a vast heave of the human race has taken place, and is now going forward, and that few causes are so important upon the destinies of mankind as those which have brought about this marvellous change. It has doubled the already fabulous rate of Transatlantic increase—a million of souls, between natural increase and immigration, are now annually added to the inhabitants of

* EMIGRATION FROM BRITISH ISLES.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1825, | 14,891 | 1846, | 129,851 |
| 1826, | 20,900 | 1847, | 258,279 |
| 1827, | 28,003 | 1848, | 248,089 |
| 1828, | 26,092 | 1849, | 299,498 |
| 1829, | 31,198 | 1850, | 280,849 |
| 1830, | 56,997 | 1851, | 335,966 |
| 1831, | 83,160 | 1852, | 368,764 |
| 1832, | 103,140 | 1853, | 328,817 |

—CHESNEY'S *Results of the Census*, 1854, p. 56; and *Parl. Papers*, May 16, 1854.

America; and it has caused a new world to spring up in Australia, which already numbers nearly a million of souls among its members, and last year consumed £14,000,000 worth of British manufactures, being four times as much as the empires of France and Russia put together, with their hundred millions of inhabitants.*

122. The vast emigration is chiefly owing to the changes produced by the Reform Bill.

It must be obvious to every partial observer that this prodigious change, with all its incalculable effects upon the world in general, and this country in particular, is mainly to be ascribed to the alteration in the dominant class in the British Islands by the effects of the Reform Bill. The immense emigration, which constitutes so remarkable a feature in these times, and has now reached such a point as considerably to overbalance the annual increase of our population, can be distinctly traced to this cause. Out of the 368,000 persons who emigrated in the year 1852, only 87,000 were bound for Australia; 280,000 went to America. They were impelled, not by the attraction of foreign riches, but by the necessities of home situations—they went not to the land of gold, but to the land of labour. Two hundred and fifty thousand of this immense multitude came from Ireland, and we are not in the dark as to the cause which sent them forth.† The famine of 1846, indeed, shook their confidence in the potato, the staple

Exports (1853) of Great Britain to Australia, France, and Russia.

| | |
|---|---|
| Australia, | £14,506,532 |
| France, | 2,731,286 |
| Russia, | 1,099,917 |

—*Parl. Returns of Trade and Navigation*, 1854.

† Emigration from Ireland from 1849 to 1853.

| Years. | Number of Emigrants. | Average price of wheat per quarter. |
|---|---|---|
| 1849, | 218,842 | 51s. 2d. |
| 1850, | 213,649 | 47 3 |
| 1851, | 254,537 | 39 4 |
| 1852, | 224,997 | 37 8 |
| 1853, | 199,392 | 41 5 |

In 1852, the remittances from America to bring out emigrants from Ireland were £1,404,000; in 1853, £1,439,000, through public channels alone, besides what was remitted through private channels.—*14th Report Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners*, pp. 56, 71.

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food of the country; but it was not then, or from that cause, that the great emigration commenced. It was in 1849, after two fine harvests—for the first of which a thanksgiving was returned—that it became so great, and in 1851 that it reached its highest point. The reason was, that the fall of prices, produced by the combined influence of a contracted and fettered currency and free trade in grain, had rendered it impossible to cultivate the land with cereal crops to a profit. The exportation of wheat to England had fallen off by 1,500,000 quarters; and Ireland, the great agricultural state, found its occupation gone, and its children sought employment in Transatlantic wilds. There can be no doubt that this emigration was, in the first instance at least, a very great advantage, though, if it continues, it may come to impair the strength and drain away the resources of the State. But be it for good or for evil, one thing is perfectly clear, that this great change is mainly to be ascribed to the Reform Bill; and that it is the magnitude of the effects with which it has thus come to be attended which renders its passing so vital an era in English history.

123. Principle of the old Constitution.

To understand how this came about, and perceive how these immense consequences are distinctly to be traced to the revolution effected in the English constitution by that great change, we have only to recollect that the old constitution which had grown up, like a code of consuetudinary law, with the wants and requirements of six centuries, was based upon the representation of classes, not numbers, and had come in the progress of time to admit all the great interests of the State to a share, and nearly an equal share, of the legislature. The House of Peers represented, or rather was composed entirely of, the landed aristocracy, spiritual and temporal. The county members were returned by the inferior landholders, tenantry, and freeholders; the universities had their members; the boroughs afforded an ample field to the various commercial and manufacturing interests; and

though the colonies were not directly represented, yet the great amount of wealth which their prosperity remitted to the mother country had enabled persons who had made their fortunes there, and whose interests and feelings were identified with those of their inhabitants, to obtain seats in the House of Commons for the rotten boroughs in great numbers. Thus the House of Commons had come to be an assembly, not of the representatives of any one class or section of society, *but of all sections and classes;* and though the influence of wealth, landed or commercial, was mainly influential in procuring the returns, yet those of labour were by no means disregarded, for the potwallopers in many large boroughs returned members of their own choice, whose influence, from the noisy character of themselves and their constituents, was much greater than would at first sight have been supposed from their limited number.

124. Which is proved by the acts of the House of Commons.

That this was the true character of the House of Commons, and the secret of its long-continued influence and popularity, is decisively proved by its legislative acts. Every interest in society was protected by the laws or fiscal regulations which it passed, and none in such a degree as to beget the suspicion that any one interest had acquired a disproportioned sway in the legislature. It is often said that the landed interest was the preponderating one in the Chapel of St Stephens; and certainly, if we consider only the heavy fiscal duties which protected its produce, we should be inclined to suppose that the opinion was well founded. But a closer examination will show that the Corn Laws were only a branch, though doubtless a most important branch, of the general system of protection established through the country, and for *every* branch of industry. The West Indies were equally protected. The heavy duties on foreign sugar, and the rapid growth of those then magnificent settlements, prove that they shared to the very full in the general protective policy which prevailed. Canada was equally secured by the duties which were so heavy a burden on Baltic

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timber. The manufacturing interest shared to the very full in the benefits of the same system. There was not a branch of manufactures which was not fenced in by heavy protective duties. The shipping interest was protected by the Navigation Laws; and though the direct representation of labour was inconsiderable in the legislature, yet experience had proved that its interests were not forgotten, for a noble fund of above six millions a-year was voluntarily imposed on themselves by the landed interest for the relief of the poor, and had been maintained inviolate during a desperate contest of twenty years' duration, which had added six hundred millions to the national debt.

125. Equal distribution of the public burdens.

What was equally significant of the effective representation of all classes of society under the old constitution, was the equitable manner in which the public burdens were distributed over the various classes of society. Universally it will be found that the first result of class government, whether of an oligarchy, aristocracy, or democracy, is to establish an exemption from direct taxation in favour of the dominant class. The exemption, so much and justly the subject of complaint, in favour of the Notables in France prior to the Revolution, was but an example of what all other notables, aristocratic or democratic, will do when they get the power. But in Great Britain, anterior to 1832, the burden of taxation was so equally diffused that no one could discover from that test in whose hands the government of the State was really vested. The income-tax, which during the war produced fifteen millions sterling, was paid by less than three hundred thousand of the most affluent of the community. Poor-rates, assessed taxes, and local burdens, to the amount of thirteen millions more, were exclusively paid by the landed interest, who, in consideration of that immense burden, were relieved of the succession tax, which was felt as very oppressive by the middle classes. That tax, however, has now, by the act of 1853,

been laid on the land, while not one of the exclusive burdens borne by it have been shared with the rest of the community.* The working classes paid no direct taxes to Government whatever; but they contributed largely to the necessities of the State in the shape of indirect duties, which produced about half of the public revenue, and from their great number were chiefly paid by that rank of society. Thus, whatever objections there might be to many parts of the old mixed constitution of the country in practice, it had long worked well, both for the protection of the industry and the equitable adjustment of the burdens of all classes of society; and the most odious feature of class government—unjust exemption from taxation—was unknown.

126. Causes of the difficulties of the representative system.

The representative system may work very well in a country where the interests of the different classes of society are identical or nearly so, and no one has an interest to endeavour to enrich itself at the expense of its neighbours; but it necessarily becomes exposed to great hazard when these interests become separate, and each class looks to its own advantage, without regard to the other ones, in the legislative measures which it advocates. A community is like a private family: all is in general harmony in childhood and early youth, when none have a wish but that of their parents; but wait till separate interests arise, till the daughters are to get marriage-portions, and the younger sons be fitted out in the world at the expense of the elder, and the harmony

* Burdens exclusively affecting Land in 1847.

| | |
|---|---|
| I. Poor-rate in 1845, a very prosperous year, | £6,847,205 |
| II. Land-tax, | 1,164,042 |
| III. Highway Rates, | 1,169,891 |
| IV. Church Rates, | 506,812 |
| V. Police, Lunatic, and Bridge Rates, estimated, | 500,000 |
| VI. Excess of assessed taxes falling on land above personal estates, estimated, | 1,500,000 |
| VII. Stamp-duties peculiar to land, | 1,200,000 |
| | £12,887,950 |

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is often found to cease. During the long growth of the British empire, the interests of all classes were the same, for they were all engaged in or dependent on the *creation* of wealth, either agricultural or commercial. Thence the unanimity which so long prevailed in the country and the House of Commons, and the long continuance, with universal concurrence, of a protective policy by the Government. But this auspicious state of things was not destined for permanent endurance; and, what is very remarkable, it was at length terminated from the consequences of the very benefits which its former existence had brought about. The mixed constitution, the representation of interests, perished from the effect of its own blessings, which had become changed into curses.

127. What first broke up the old constitution.

The long enjoyment of peace in the British Islands, and the unexampled successes and triumphs of the war, had gradually raised up a class in Great Britain whose interests were not identical with those of production, but adverse to it. The riches made during the war, when the merchants and manufacturers of England enjoyed the practical monopoly of the commerce of the world, had been so immense that the holders of realised wealth came to overbalance those engaged in its creation. The interests of the *consumer* began to be spoken of—a topic never broached in former days, when the powers of consumption were mainly dependent upon those of production. The cessation of the property tax and the long duration of peace augmented immensely the number and influence of those who, enjoying a fixed money income from the industry and accumulation of former days, found their fortunes and consideration in society augmented by every diminution that could be effected in the cost of the principal articles of consumption. Thence the introduction of the *cheapening system*, and of a ceaseless effort on the part of the persons enjoying a fixed income to beat down the remuneration of all those engaged in the work of production. The strife, as might

have been anticipated when two such powerful interests were brought into collision, was violent and long-continued; and the contraction of the currency, which lowered prices 50 per cent, was of course the object of strenuous support from the partisans of the cheapening system. At length the producers were overthrown, and thence the decay of domestic agriculture, the vast increase of foreign importation of food, and the prodigious emigration of agricultural labourers from the British Islands in the middle of the nineteenth century. So naturally did this change in the policy of Government arise from the altered position of the different classes of society, in consequence of the increase of realised wealth during and after the war, that it may fairly be considered as unavoidable; and one of the means by which Providence, at the appointed time, checks the growth of aged societies, occasions the downfall of worn-out empires, and provides in fresh situations for the farther dispersion of mankind.

123. The Reform Bill was an effect, in the first instance, of the increase of realised wealth.

The great means by which this consummation was effected was the Reform Bill; but that organic change, important as it was, is itself to be regarded as an effect rather than a cause, although, like other effects in the ceaseless chain of human events, it became a cause, and a most material one, in its turn. The more the important years which preceded the passing of the Reform Bill are studied, the more clearly does it appear that it was the discontent of the producing classes, occasioned by the immense fall in the price of their produce, which induced the cry for a change. They had petitioned Parliament over and over again for relief, but in vain; the legislature, intrenched in the close boroughs, the citadels of realised wealth, turned a deaf ear to their complaints. Instead of expanding the currency, so as to increase the remuneration of industry, they contracted it still farther with every successive catastrophe produced by that contraction itself. The consequence was, that the producing classes, both in town and country, irritated beyond endur-

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ance by the long-continued suffering and the disregard of their well-founded complaints, combined together to effect a total change in the constitution, and the excitement consequent on the French Revolution enabled them to carry their intentions into effect. No common man, William Cobbett said that the moment he heard in America of the passing of the bill compelling the resumption of cash payments by the Bank of England in 1819, he took shipping to return to this country, convinced that parliamentary reform could not much longer be delayed; and the result has proved that he was right in his anticipations.

129. And of the fall of prices occasioned by the contraction of the currency.

These considerations explain how it came to pass that the passion for reform, unfelt as a national feeling prior to 1820, became gradually stronger and stronger, until, in 1832, it was altogether irresistible. The feeling which produced it was the most powerful which can agitate an intelligent community, and which, when it pervades all ranks in the state, ere long acquires such force that it must obtain its entire direction. "*Deliverance from evil!*" was the universal cry. This desire, which had acquired such force and intensity as to have become a perfect passion with nearly all classes, and especially the agricultural, is easily explained, when we recollect how deeply all interests, and especially those of labour and production, had been affected by the prodigious change of prices of commodities of all sorts, from grain to cotton, which had been effected by the successive contractions of the currency in 1819 and 1826. With each of these contractions the cry for reform was revived; with the last it became so powerful as in six years wrought an entire change in the feelings, desires, and interests of all classes. It is in this reduction of prices that the explanation of the English revolution, with all its mighty effects, foreign and domestic, is to be found.

We have only to cast our eyes on the table below, exhibiting the change in the price of the principal articles of commerce from 1824 to 1832, to see how this

130. How this fall engendered the passion for reform.

was brought about.* Every article of production or exchange fell gradually in price after the suppression of small notes in 1826, till it settled at about two-thirds of its former amount. There was no class of society, save the holders of realised wealth, which was not affected or ruined by the change. The capitalists and fundholders alone were benefited: thence the cry, that the rich were every day getting richer, and the poor poorer. Under the constant decline of prices produced by the contraction of the currency, this was no senseless popular outcry; it was the simple statement of an acknowledged and undoubted fact. The organs of the monied interest made a boast of it, when, after the contraction of the currency had worked out its full effects, they said their measures had "made the sovereign worth two sovereigns." They had done so; and not less certainly had they made the labourer's shilling only a sixpence. They had halved the remuneration of industry when they had doubled the value of money—they had made the labourer's wage a shilling a-day instead of two shillings. The two effects were consistent, for they both sprang from the same cause. This constant decline of fortunes and diminution of income in the largest, most industrious, and most important class of the community, was felt as the more galling, from the contrast exhibited at the same time by the situation of the

* Prices of principal Articles of Commerce, from 1824 to 1832.

| Year. | Wheat per Quarter. | Cotton per lb. | Indigo per lb. | Iron per ton. | Silk per lb. | Sugar per cwt. | Tea per lb. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | s. d. | s. d. | s. d. | £ s. | s. d. | s. d. | s. d. |
| 1824 | 64 3 | 1 0 | 9 0 | 6 0 | 14 3 | 36 0 | 2 7 |
| 1825 | 63 0 | 1 0¼ | 15 0 | 11 10 | 20 7 | 37 0 | 2 6 |
| 1826 | 55 8 | 1 0 | 15 0 | 10 0 | 13 1 | 44 0 | 2 6 |
| 1827 | 50 2 | 0 10½ | 12 0 | 7 0 | 13 3 | 41 0 | 2 2 |
| 1828 | 71 8 | 0 8½ | 13 0 | 6 10 | 15 6 | 44 0 | 2 1 |
| 1829 | 55 4 | 0 8½ | 10 0 | 5 10 | 11 4 | 43 0 | 2 2 |
| 1830 | 64 10 | 0 8 | 8 0 | 5 0 | 10 6 | 30 0 | 2 0 |
| 1831 | 58 3 | 0 9 | 7 8 | 4 15 | 12 11 | 28 0 | 2 1 |
| 1832 | 52 1 | 0 9 | 6 3 | 4 0 | 11 0 | 30 0 | 2 0 |

—Tooke *On Prices*, vol. ii. pp. 390, 416.

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holders of realised wealth, who were every day becoming richer, not from an addition to their incomes, but an addition to its exchangeable value. Every holder of commodities felt them every day getting cheaper: the longer he retained them, the worse was his sale, the greater his loss on his transactions. Manufacturers and farmers found that they could not, with markets constantly falling, work to a profit except by saving every shilling in the cost of production, and lowering to the uttermost the wages of their workmen. Thence a steady fall at once in the profits of stock and the wages of labour, and the distressing recurrence of strikes and organisation of trades-unions to arrest the decline. Thence, too, the origin of the sore and angry feeling between the employers and employed, which has never since been allayed, and has so much aggravated, in periods of distress, the dangers of our social position. All classes, save the monied, were suffering from the long continuance of a fall of prices; and this general suffering produced the ill-humours which, skilfully directed by the popular leaders against the nomination boroughs, produced the change of the constitution.

131. Which explains the universal hostility at the close boroughs.

It is seldom that a universal passion, which seizes a particular age or country in this manner, is entirely erroneous in its direction. The boroughmongers and venal boroughs were the object of general obloquy for some years preceding the passing of the Reform Bill; and it is no wonder that they were so, for it was in these seats that the power was intrenched which had produced the general suffering. The holders of realised capital had purchased them, or acquired their direction, and they formed a majority of the House of Commons, which not only had introduced all the new measures, but turned a deaf ear to all the suffering they had occasioned. In this way the virtual representation of interests through these boroughs, which had worked so well down to the close of the war, had not only ceased to be beneficial, but it had become injurious. That representation answers very well, and is the subject of no serious complaint, as

long as the interests of all classes are identical; but it turns into a serious social evil when those interests are divided, and one has acquired the power to enrich itself, by legislative measures, at the expense of the others. From that moment the representation becomes the object of general hostility; and it is no wonder it is so, for it is the cause of general suffering. When all are *making money*, their interests are the same, and the government of the many by the few is quietly acquiesced in, because measures conducive to the general benefit are alone adopted. But when one class *has made money*, and begins to forward its separate interests by forcing through measures conducive to its own advantage, by cheapening everything, and so ruining the others, nothing but the most rancorous hostility between them can be anticipated. This change took place in Great Britain between 1815 and 1830, in consequence of the immense additions made to the realised wealth of the community during those years of pacific accumulation, and thence the triumph of the Reform Bill and all its incalculable consequences.

132. And which was only rendered worse by the talent which got in by the close boroughs.

The large amount of talent which found its way into the House of Commons through the nomination or venal boroughs, after this change was fully established, so far from being an alleviation of these evils, became the greatest possible aggravation of them, because it tended only to augment the phalanx of ability by which interests adverse to those of the majority were advocated. Talent at the bar is a very good thing as long as it is exerted on our side, or equally divided between us and our opponents; but when it is *wholly enlisted against us*, we are much better without it. This was exactly what took place in Great Britain during the latter years of the war, and the first fifteen years of the peace. Ability in plenty came into the House of Commons, and nearly all through the avenue of the nomination boroughs; but when it arrived there, it was all found enrolled in the ranks of capital, and pursuing measures adverse to the interests of industry. All the able young men of the time

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were supporters of the contraction of the currency, the cheapening system, and free trade. It could not be otherwise, for they were all brought into the House by the interest of the *millionaires* either in land or money. The producing classes—the millions dependent on industry, all who were making money—found themselves not only outvoted by those who had made it, but silenced by the eloquence which they had enlisted on their side. This was the unkindest cut of all, for it deprived suffering industry even of the last consolation of the unfortunate—that of being heard in their defence.

133. Which explains the changes of general opinion during the reform movement.

These considerations at once explain the changes in general opinion, and even, as it at first sight appears, in the national mind, during the progress of the reform movement, and the entire transposition of classes which had taken place at its conclusion. Every successive election which took place from 1826 to 1832 exhibited an additional number of *counties* won over to the reform interest, and of boroughs thrown open. These were considered, and celebrated at the time, as so many triumphs over the dominant oligarchy who had so long oppressed the nation: in reality, they were so many triumphs of the interests of production over those of realised wealth. The impulse given to the popular party by the success of the French Revolution of 1830 brought the two interests, now in open hostility, to an equality, as appeared in the majority of 1 in a House of 605 for leave to bring in the Reform Bill; and the rapid growth of the popular influence, during the two years of general suffering and ceaseless agitation which succeeded, gave the popular party so great a majority in the Parliament elected in April 1831, as enabled it to coerce both the Crown and the House of Peers, and effect by forcible means an entire change in the constitution. The *counties* were nearly unanimous in favour of reform, and against the old constitution — a marvellous change from the time when they uniformly returned members who were its staunchest supporters, but easily explained when

it is recollected that they depended on the interests of agriculture, the greatest branch of production, which, with the exception of three years from 1822 to 1825, had been in a constant state of suffering since the contraction of the currency in 1819.

134. The new constituencies were some time of discovering their own power.

When the victory was gained, and the lower class of shopkeepers and householders within boroughs were invested with the absolute government of the empire, it was not at first that they either felt their strength or became sensible of the power with which they had been invested. The change effected by the admission of the newly enfranchised classes was so immense, that men at first could not believe in its reality. The nobleman in the vicinity of the borough, the capitalist within its bounds, was still the object of antiquated reverence and respect, after all real power had slipped from their hands. The new voters were a heterogeneous body, who had never before been united by any common bond, and many of whom were still subject to the old influences. Several elections required to intervene before they discovered their real strength, or were so united as to be able to exercise it with effect. But when questions affecting the pecuniary interests of the new electors were brought forward, their preponderance became manifest, and a sense of their strength made them ready to exercise it. Leaders were soon found, who, discarding and even opposing the aristocratic influences which had so long been all-powerful in the boroughs, boldly cultivated the affections and stood on the support of the class to whom the Reform Bill had given a majority. At length it was discovered where the real power lay, and the aristocratic leaders who had aided the people in forcing through the Reform Bill found to their dismay that they had cut away the branch on which they themselves sat, and put themselves into Schedule A as effectually as they had done their most obnoxious opponents.

The producing classes both in town and country thought their ascendancy would be secured by the Reform Bill,

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and especially the £10 clause, which accordingly became the object of the most enthusiastic and general support by all the middle and working classes in the State. It was mainly by their exertions that the bill, with that vital clause unchanged, was carried. The cry of "The bill, *the whole bill*, and nothing but the bill!" proved, by their aid, victorious. Above ninety out of the hundred and one county members were by their aid carried in the decisive election of April 1831 in the reform interest; and it was they, and the Scotch and Irish members, who formed the majority which outvoted the borough members and carried the bill. But never were expectations more fallacious than those which, from this great triumph, anticipated an addition to the legislative strength of the producing classes. It is true, the ascendancy of realised capital, which had gained possession of the majority of the close boroughs, was destroyed; but, on the other hand, a new interest, still more inimical to the interests of production, was installed in power, of which it has ever since retained possession. This was the *buying and selling class*—the interest of shopkeepers, to whom the £10 clause gave the entire command of the majority of the House of Commons, and with it of the whole empire.

135. Great mistake in the estimate of the effect of the Reform Bill.

136. Command of the House of Commons gained by the shopkeepers.

To understand how this came about, it is only necessary to recollect that by the Reform Bill nearly *two-thirds* of the House of Commons was composed of members for boroughs. Experience has now ascertained what at the time was far from being anticipated — that two-thirds of the constituents of this majority were persons occupying premises, for the most part shops, rented from £10 to £20 a-year.* Here, then, is the governing class

* The Author is enabled to speak with confidence on this point, from having presided for twenty years in the Registration Court of Lanarkshire, which includes Glasgow, and where there have never been less than two thousand, sometimes as many as six thousand, claims for enrolment in each year. From his own observation, as well as the opinion of the most experienced agents whom he consulted on the point, he arrived at the conclusion that the majority of every urban constituency is to be found among persons *paying a rent for houses or shops, or the two together, between £10 and £20*, and a decided majority below £25. But in order to make sure of the point, he has examined

of the British empire under the new constitution, and in their ascendancy is to be found the real spring which has ever since directed the whole policy of Great Britain, both external and internal. The injustice of giving this class the command of the State is obvious, from the consideration that it is a minority both in number and value. The classes in the United Empire dependent on agriculture, according to the last census, were just equal to the manufacturing, each being ten and a half millions; and the land pays £3,500,000 out of the £5,300,000 of the income-tax, yet its representatives in England are only 159 to 341 for boroughs, and in the whole empire 253 to 405. This effect was not generally anticipated at the time, the attention of men being mainly directed to the democratic tendency of the much-agitated change. But even at the outset there were not awanting those who prognosticated this result from the bill, and predicted the virtual disfranchisement of all other classes, and effective establishment of the class government of the shopkeeping interest, from the alteration; and the prediction has been so completely verified to the letter that all other consequences of the Reform Bill sink into insignificance in comparison. All the subsequent changes in the legislation, commercial policy, and foreign measures of the British government since that time, which have given rise to such vehement feuds

his note-book of cases enrolled this year (1834), and he finds that they stood thus for the burgh of Glasgow:—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Total claims, . . . . . | | 1530 |
| Enrolled on rents between £10 and £20, . | 787 | |
| Above £20, and all other classes, . . | 614 | |
| Rejected, . . . . . | 129 | |
| | —— | 1530 |

As Glasgow contains within itself a larger number of warehouses, manufactories, and shops at very high rents—varying from £5 to £1500 a-year—than any other town, except the metropolis, in the empire, this may be considered as proof positive, that over the whole country the majority enrolled on rents below £20 is still more decided. There is no other record but the revising barrister's or registering sheriff's notes of cases which will show where the real majority of the voters is to be found. The returns of houses paying the tax beginning at £20 will throw no light on the subject, for the great majority of voters in towns are enrolled on shops which pay no tax; and even the rating to poor-rates is not a test to be relied on, as it is often made under the real value, and in many boroughs there are no police or other local burdens at all.

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amongst ourselves, and such unbounded astonishment in foreign countries, have arisen from this change in the dominant class in the House of Commons. The proof of this is decisive. The leaders of the Conservatives—that is, the party of Protection—have been twice since in possession of power, once in 1841 and once in 1852; but on both occasions they have been forced to abandon what they formerly maintained: on the first, from an alleged change of opinion on the part of Sir Robert Peel; on the last, from no similar change, but the ascertained strength of their opponents, elected by the trading constituencies.

137. Errors on both sides during the contest.

It will belong to the future volumes of this history to trace the consequences of the entire transference of power in the British Islands from the producing to the buying and selling class, upon the whole policy of the empire—domestic, colonial, and foreign—and its effects upon the destinies of the empire and of the world. In the mean time, it is material to signalise the faults on both sides committed during the course of the contest, and the errors in the formation of the constitution which were acted upon, and have produced effects now irremediable. Such a survey will give much occasion for regret in public measures, and much ground for forgiveness to individual men. The more that the operation of general causes is unfolded, the less ground does there appear for censure of particular persons; and of many who have stood forth as leaders in the strife shall we be led to say, in the words of the philosopher, "He has dashed with his oar to hasten the cataract; he has waved with his fan to give speed to the winds."[1]

[1] Ferguson, Essay on Civil Society.

138. Great and early fault of the Conservatives.

The Conservatives, or Protectionists as they were afterwards called, committed a grievous mistake, and they were guilty, politically speaking, of a great sin, in exerting their influence to prevent the extension of the right of returning members to the great manufacturing towns and districts. The demand for them on the part of the inhabitants of these great hives of industry and workshops of wealth was just and reasonable; its concession

would have been equally gracious and expedient, and in perfect accordance with the ruling principle of the constitution, which was the representation of ALL classes. So strongly were the interests of realised wealth then intrenched in the legislature, that a very small concession would have been gratefully received by the advocates of industry, then practically unrepresented, and it might possibly have postponed for a very long period, if not altogether averted, the *entire* transference of power to the buying and selling class, which by its refusal was so soon after effected. The division on the East Retford question was the first, and perhaps the most important, in the many causes which conspired to overturn the existing frame of government. The argument then so generally used and relied upon, that the constitution, with all its theoretical imperfections, had worked well, and therefore should be continued, was a palpable sophism decisively disproved by the clamour raised for its abolition. A whole nation never concurs in demanding a change in institutions which have proved universally beneficial. As long as the nomination boroughs had proved protective of all interests, they were the objects of no obloquy; it was when they fell into the hands of those who were actuated by an adverse interest, and pursued measures destructive of the prosperity of the working classes, that the cry for their abolition arose. In resisting the demand for representation on the part of the manufacturing districts, the Conservatives fell into the usual error of judging of things as they had been, not as they are. They applied the same measure to a grown man which they had found answered a boy; they kept looking for the sun in the east, because it had once risen there. Worse than this, they forgot the duties of power in the enjoyment of its sweets, and defended the nomination boroughs as if they had been their private property, not a trust for the public good.

What they should have done at this crisis is now sufficiently apparent. They should have acquiesced in the

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demand for representatives on the part of the great manufacturing towns and districts, and striven only to fix the constituency in them on such a basis as would have secured an adequate attention to their interests, and not endangered the constitution. Neglect of those interests, measures subversive of them, had occasioned the demand for reform; attention to those interests, steps calculated to promote them, were the appropriate remedy. By transferring the franchise of every borough convicted of bribery to a great manufacturing town, a mode of solving the difficulty was presented, so just as to disarm complaint, so gradual as to remove apprehension, so frequent of recurrence as to inspire hope. No political party ever committed a greater mistake than the Conservatives did, in declining to avail themselves of this just and safe mode of adjusting an important and delicate political question, and missing the opportunity of accommodating the constitution without risk to the varying circumstances of society in the British Islands.

139. What they should have done.

140. Error of the Conservatives in throwing out the Duke of Wellington's Administration.

The next great mistake committed, not by the whole, but by a considerable section of the Conservative party, was in coalescing with the Radicals in November 1830, to throw out the Duke of Wellington's Administration. There might have been steps taken by that Administration of which they did not approve: the mode of carrying through Catholic emancipation might have been violent and unconstitutional; the men who did it might have been worthy, at the proper time, of parliamentary censure; but was it a fitting time to inflict such a chastisement, when the nation was convulsed by the reform movement, and the recent overthrow of the monarchy in France had roused in the very highest degree the revolutionary passions over the whole country? What was this but to expose the nation to the risk of great social and organic change, at the very time when it was most violently excited, and the example of successful revolution in the neighbouring kingdom had roused the

revolutionary passions to the very highest pitch? To drive the Duke of Wellington from the helm at that juncture, was not to punish him or his Ministry, but themselves and their children.

141. The Duke of Wellington's declaration against Reform.

The Duke of Wellington's famous declaration against reform, to which the Liberal party ascribe the subsequent irresistible strength of the democratic passion, was in one respect wise, in another unwise. It was unquestionably wise to declare against any change in the constitution, at a time when the nation was so violently excited, and when opening the door to innovation might induce revolution; and the Duke did right to say that the King's government would not *at that time* be a party to any such proceeding. But the result has proved that he did wrong in declaring against reform at *all times* and under all circumstances, and making the nation believe that, unless they forced it at that moment, they would never gain it at another. The necessary effect of this belief was to double the strength of the movement party at that time, by uniting to their ranks all who thought that the changes in society, which the last thirty years had induced, required an admission, as beyond all doubt they did, of the representatives of the new interests in the State into the constitution. The Duke of Wellington spoke of land being the only sure foundation of government, and of the popular party already enjoying as large a share of it as was consistent with the well-being of society and security of the nation; forgetting, or rather never having been sensible of, the vast increase of the commercial classes which had arisen from the peace purchased by his own victories, and the duplication of their strength owing to the effect of the monetary measures to which he himself had been a party. It is in vain to expect that men, having attained to majority, will be satisfied with the parental rule which was cheerfully submitted to during the helplessness of infancy or the docility of youth. The cry of nature is, "Give us self-government, though it be to our

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own ruin." What Wellington should have said was, "This is not the time or the mode for bringing on the great question of organic change in the constitution; but when the excitement of the moment has subsided, Government will be prepared to bring forward measures which will satisfy all the reasonable wishes of the people." Whether such a promise would have satisfied the majority of Reformers may well indeed be doubted; but at least it would have thrown the responsibility of ulterior and perilous changes on them alone, and relieved Government of the reproach of having, by an ill-timed declaration of implacable hostility, rendered the movement party unmanageable in the hands of their opponents.

142. Faults of the Liberals, first in forcing on reform at all at this time.

The faults committed by the Liberal party during the progress of this great contest were still more glaring, and they may be pronounced upon with more confidence than those of their opponents, because, as they were victorious in the strife, their measures were carried into execution, and have thus been brought to the test of experience. The first wrong step which they took, and which perhaps drew after it all the rest, was bringing forward the reform question at all, at a time when the nation was convulsed with the triumph of the Barricades, and all calm discussion of the proposed change, vital as it was, had become out of the question. Considered as a party advantage indeed, and as a stepping-stone by which they themselves might ascend to power, and terminate the long and hated dominion of the Tories, it was natural that the Whigs should make the most of the French Revolution; and no one can with reason blame them for having done all they could, by ordinary means, to turn it to the best advantage. They were fully entitled to do so: they did so: they supplanted the Duke of Wellington's Administration, and seated themselves in power. But having done this, they went a step further, and resolved upon a change in the constitution so vast as should for ever prevent the return of their opponents to power. What was this but

setting fire to the house in which they both dwelt, in order to drive their rivals out of the wing which they still occupied? The danger was imminent that the whole edifice, as had occurred in France, would be involved in the conflagration. Mr Pitt had, at no distant period, given a memorable example of what they should have done on occasion of their triumph. In 1784, when he defeated the coalition of Lord North and Mr Fox, he terminated the reign of the Whigs, which had lasted almost without interruption for a century, and the majority which he gained in the Commons (136) was just the same as Lord Grey acquired by his dissolution of Parliament in April 1831. But Mr Pitt made no change in the constitution, when the enthusiasm in his favour, and the majority he had acquired, enabled him to have done so with a certainty of success; he made no attempt to extinguish the Whig boroughs, numerous and corrupt as they were: though a reformer at that time, he abstained from reform when it might have imperilled the State. He had the strength of a giant, but he did not use it like a giant. Thence half a century of power to his party, and the glories of the Revolutionary war, and unexampled extension and prosperity to his country.

143. Great error in the uniform representation in the boroughs.

The next, and by far the most serious fault which the Whigs committed at this time, was in the structure of the Reform Bill itself, which was of such a kind as rendered the existence of the British empire, as it then stood, for any considerable time a matter of impossibility. The great, the irremediable error committed in this point of view, was that which, at first sight, seems its great recommendation, and what from its simplicity had, through life, recommended it to Lord Grey, viz. the *uniformity* of the borough representation. As three-fifths of the House of Commons was composed of the members for boroughs, and three-fifths of the constituents of the boroughs were persons renting tenements rented at from £10 to £20, the entire command of the country was vested in that class, a decided majority of which were shopkeepers, or

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persons whom they influenced. The land, the colonies, the shipping interest, were, to all practical purposes, disfranchised; because, though in part still represented in Parliament, they were in a decided minority, and consequently their complaints and their votes were alike powerless and disregarded. The ruling class thus vested with supreme and uncontrolled dominion of the vast and varied British empire dependent on such various interests, was actuated by *one only interest, that of buying cheap and selling dear.* This thenceforward became the ruling principle of British legislation, to which every statesman, of whatever party, and whatever his principles had been, or still were, was compelled to give in his adhesion. Every one soon discovered, from the temper of the House of Commons elected by the new constituencies, that he could carry on the government in no other way. This affords the key to the whole subsequent changes in the commercial policy of the British empire, and goes far to exculpate many who have stood foremost, and been most exposed to obloquy, in bringing them about. Ever since the Reform Bill became the law of the land, if not, as Napoleon said we were, a nation of shopkeepers, we have at least been a nation *governed by shopkeepers.*

144. Mistake of the Whigs as to the influence in the boroughs.

Earl Grey was not ignorant of the preponderating strength of the boroughs in the reformed House of Commons; but he was deluded in regard to the influence which would direct these boroughs, by the same general delusion which was then so general, and in truth was the foundation of the whole subsequent changes of the British empire. This was the blindness of an entire generation to the effects on the relative position of the different classes of society produced by the monetary bills of 1819 and 1826. As these bills added fifty per cent to the value of realised capital, and took as much from the remuneration of industry, they in effect withdrew the greater part of the boroughs from territorial, and brought them under monied or trading interests. They halved the income and doubled the debts

of the landed proprietors, while they doubled the exchangeable value of the income of the inhabitants of towns. Thence an entire change in the ruling influences in the great majority of the boroughs. They rapidly slipped out of the hands of the burdened and impoverished landlords who had hitherto held them, and fell under the direction of the monied or trading classes, whose fortunes had been practically doubled by legislative measures. What was called the opening of these boroughs, which occurred so often before and after the Reform Bill, and was so much boasted of at the time, was in truth not an opening, but a transference of it to a different interest in the State. The borough was still governed as much as ever it was by a clique, but it was a clique of different persons, and actuated by different interests. It was no longer composed of the squire, his factor, the parson, and attorney, in the borough, but the manufacturer, the warehouseman, and two or three of the chief tradesmen in it; it no longer met in the back parlour, but the back shop.

145. Which led to the practical disfranchisement of the colonies and shipping interests.

This general transference of the boroughs from the producing to the buying and selling interest, from the operation of the new monetary system, was for the first time brought into active operation when the Reform Bill gave them a real representation. When they were notoriously and avowedly venal, they did not, in reality, represent the inhabitants who dwelt in them, but the merchants, capitalists, or colonial interests by whom they were purchased. Gatton, with its ruined church, might represent Jamaica; Old Sarum, with its green mound, millions of our sable subjects in Hindostan. It was the effective nature of the representation, which the colonies and shipping interests thus acquired, which rendered the British constitution of such long endurance, and so generally popular, notwithstanding its obvious deviation from theoretical perfection. The colonies and shipping interest were really, though not in form, represented under the old constitution; and this was done so effectually that the

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West Indian was for long the strongest single interest in the House of Commons; it could, during the war, command eighty votes. But when the representation of the British boroughs was rendered not nominal, but real, this state of things was entirely altered. Not only was the door, which had so long let in the real representatives of the colonial and shipping interests, closed to them, but it was opened to their opponents.

146. And they were subjected to the government of adverse interests.

The shopkeepers in the small towns, generally from three to five hundred in number, turned a deaf ear to any candidate who talked to them of colonial or maritime interests, of which they knew little, and for which they cared less; but they received with open arms any candidate who promised them cheap sugar, diminished cost of wood and freights, cheapened corn, tea, and coffee. Thus not only was the virtual representation of the colonies and shipping interest cut off by the Reform Bill, but the numerous seats they had formerly held, if not extinguished, were *transferred to an adverse interest*—a change which explains the whole subsequent alteration in the commercial and colonial policy of the British empire. It must therefore be regarded as the next, and perhaps the greatest error in the Reform Bill, that, while it cut off the indirect representation of the colonies and shipowners, it *did not give them a direct one*, and left them entirely at the mercy of a majority in the British Islands, composed, for the most part, of persons of limited and local information, and governed entirely by adverse interests. To produce cheap and sell dear was for their interest; to buy their produce cheap and sell it dear was for the interest of their new governors.

147. The urban constituencies have got for themselves an entire exemption from direct taxation.

Two facts, of general notoriety and decisive importance, demonstrate the reality of these vast changes, and the unbounded influence which they must have on the future fate of the British empire. The first of these is, that, in less than a quarter of a century after the Reform Bill had given them the government of the country, the urban shopkeepers had obtained for themselves an *entire exemp-*

*tion from every species of direct taxation,* and laid it with increased severity upon the disfranchised classes in the State; while, at the same time, they contrived to shake off all the indirect taxes by which they were more immediately affected. They have got the window-tax taken off, and the house-tax from all houses below £20, the line *where the ruling class begins;* and when Lord Derby's Ministry brought forward the proposal, obviously just, to lower the duty to £10 houses, they instantly expelled them from office by a vote of the House of Commons. They kept the income-tax for long at incomes above £150, and now they have only brought it down, under the pressure of war, to £100—a line which practically insures an exemption from that burden to nearly the whole of the ruling occupants of houses below £20; while a tax producing now above £10,000,000 a-year is saddled exclusively upon less than 250,000 persons in the empire.* They have got quit entirely of the tax on grain, lowered almost to nothing those on wood and meat, and signally reduced those on tea and sugar and coffee, in which so large a part of their consumption lies; while the direct taxes on the land and higher classes, not embracing above 250,000 persons, have been increased so as now to yield above £20,000,000 a-year, or £80 BY EACH PERSON on an average, in income-tax, assessed taxes, and stamps! In a word, since they got the power, the notables of England have established a much more entire and unjust exemption, in their own favour, from taxation than the notables in France did before the Revolution—a curious and instructive circumstance, indicating how identical men are in all ranks when their interests are concerned, and they obtain power, and the futility of the idea that the extension of the number of the governors is any security whatever against the establishment of an

* The persons assessed for the income-tax, under Schedule D (Trades and Professions), are only 146,000! The holders of land and funds cannot be above 100,000 more.

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arbitrary or unjust system of administration over the governed.

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148. Prospective abandonment of our colonial empire.

The next circumstance which has demonstrated the reality of the changes now described is the ruin which has, since the Reform Bill, been brought on some of our greatest colonies, and the steps evidently taking, both by Government and in the colonies themselves, to sever the connection with the rest. It is needless to say anything of the West Indies; it is universally known that, within the last twenty-five years, and from the effect of the Reform Bill, and the measures to which it led, they have been all but ruined, and that cultivation in them is only carried on at a loss by the proprietors, to avoid the desperate measure of entire abandonment of the estates. The other colonies of Great Britain, Canada, the Cape, and Australia, have either revolted, or become so discontented that they had to be disarmed, or given such unequivocal symptoms of alienation from the parent state that Government at home, foreseeing a severance which they can no longer prevent, is already giving them the constitutions which are to prepare them for independence, and withdrawing the troops that might maintain the authority of the centre of the empire.

149. Which is defended by the Government and Free-traders.

As usual in such cases, the authors of a change, which they see has become inevitable, maintain that it is a benefit, and have long been preparing the country for a break-up of our transmarine empire, by diffusing the doctrine that it is only a burden, and that, by making the colonies independent, we might retain the benefits of their connection without the weight of their defence. Time will show whether this opinion is well founded or not; but, in the mean time, one thing is clear, that, for good or for evil, this great change in the policy of the empire is the result of the Reform Bill; because it took away the indirect representation of the colonies, without giving them a direct one, and delivered over

their government to the rule of urban constituencies in the dominant island, which not only had no interest in common with them, but were actuated by an adverse one. Under the rule of a popular Assembly, thus constituted, a *new empire*, maintaining itself, like Holland or Venice, by an extensive commerce and flourishing manufactures, without external possessions, may possibly arise; but the preservation of the *old empire*, extending its offshoots into all the quarters of the globe, and retaining them all in willing subjection to the heart of the State, from the experienced benefits of the connection, is impossible.

150. Labour was unrepresented.

Another great error committed in the construction of the new constitution was that, in the majority at least of the House of Commons, *labour* was wholly unrepresented. This cannot be disputed, when it is recollected that in the urban constituencies the franchise is fixed at payment of a £10, in the rural of a £50 rent, or a 40s. *freehold* in England, either of which is exclusive of the great body of labourers both in town and country. The retention of the freemen in a few great cities cannot be called a representation of labour; it is rather a representation of venality and corruption. Without doubt, a uniform representation, founded on a low suffrage, as household or £5 rent, is the worst of all foundations for government, because it is *a class government of labourers*—that is, of the most ignorant and irresponsible class in the community. But it is one thing to give the operatives, whether in town or country, the entire command of the State; it is another, and a very different thing, to exclude them entirely from its government, and expose them, without the means of legal resistance, to the rule of an assembly almost entirely elected by persons having an adverse interest. To beat down the remuneration of labour, both in the fields and the workshops, is the obvious interest of the employers, either in town or country, and the persons who deal in

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their produce, because it diminishes the cost of production or purchase; and it is soon discovered that this is most effectually done, because in the way least likely to attract attention, by a contraction of the currency, and the application of the principles of free trade to every branch of commerce. The frequency and alarming character of the strikes which have prevailed in every part of the empire since these principles were carried into practice, and the steady emigration of above 250,000 agricultural labourers for the last eight years, even in times of greatest prosperity, from the British Islands, prove that the effects of this class legislation have been fully felt by the working classes, and that they have sought to escape from them, either by illegal combination against the laws, or by withdrawing entirely from the sphere of their influence.

151. Want of the representation of intelligence and education.

The last obvious defect of the new constitution was, that it as completely disfranchised intellect and education as it did labour and production. It is not meant to be asserted, in making this remark, that the reformed House of Commons has been by any means destitute of talent. Beyond all doubt, the new constituencies have sent forward many men of robust intellect and great business information, skilled in the art of guiding the multitude, and who have left indelible marks of their ability in the legislation and fortunes of the country; but still they were not the representatives of intellect and education—they are the representatives of a class interest, that of cheap production and cheap buying. All their talents and energies—and both have often been great indeed—have been directed to advance those interests for the benefit of their constituents, without any regard to the effect of the measures they advocated upon the general or unrepresented interests of the empire. Schedules A and B closed the door as effectually upon the high education and intelligence, as they did upon the colonies or shipping interest of

the empire, because they barred the entrance by which alone they had hitherto obtained admission into the legislature. The young men of talent and eloquence who had distinguished themselves at college, and got in by a nomination borough—the race of Pitt and Fox, of Burke and Sheridan, of Wyndham and Romilly, of Mackintosh and Brougham—has become extinct in the House of Commons since 1832. Such as are still there of the former race, had all found an entrance under the old system by the nomination boroughs. No man who knows anything of human affairs, indeed, will assert that a legislature, the majority of which consisted of such men, would be a good frame of government. There is probably more truth than the learned professors are willing to admit in the celebrated saying of Frederick the Great, that "if he wished utterly to ruin a province, he would put it into the hands of the philosophers;" or of Napoleon, that "if an empire were made of granite, it would soon be reduced to powder by the political economists." But admitting all this, it is equally obvious that to give the learned professions only five seats out of six hundred and sixty-eight to themselves, and send them everywhere else to be swamped by a majority of farmers, provision-dealers, or publicans, was a very great evil, which may come eventually to affect in a most serious manner the fortunes of the empire.

152. Dangers arising from this circumstance

No body of men, and least of all the legislature intrusted with the government of the country, can emancipate itself without risk from the influence of intelligence and genius, and surrender itself without reserve to the guidance of material interests. The necessary effect of such exclusion is to produce an absence of enlarged views on general welfare, and to restrict every one to the selfish dictates of interested constituents. Independence of character, intrepidity of thought, wide views for the universal good, can hardly now obtain admission into the House of Commons. Large constituencies have an instinctive dread of such

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characters; they are either jealous of or hate them. Ability and eloquence, indeed, they all desire, but it is ability devoted to their interests, eloquence governed by their will. Their wish is to have, not representatives, but delegates, and no man worthy of ruling an empire will become such. Hence the House of Commons, since the passing of the Reform Bill, has been nearly deserted, so far as new members are concerned, by men of brilliant talents; and they have sought to influence public affairs by writing in the periodical or daily press, the talent in which has as much increased since the change, as that of the *new* entrants into the legislature has diminished.

153. Talent has taken refuge in the press: its danger.

But the great and growing influence of the press is itself fraught with still greater danger, for it is necessarily one-sided. Every one reads what suits his own views, and in general little else; and thus the ability of the press tends rather to confirm preconceived opinions, and widen the breaches which divide society, than to heal divisions or produce rectitude of judgment. The nomination boroughs let in independent talent, because they were either purchased or acquired by the influence of one, always less jealous than a multitude of masters. They were felt as an evil, however, because they produced a legislature at variance, on essential points, with the wishes and interests of the great urban hives of industry. What should have been done, and was not done, was to have given as many seats as were taken away, not to *one class*, the £10 householders, but to *various classes*, which might have afforded an inlet into the legislature at once to manufacturing and commercial wealth, colonial industry, shipping interests, and general intelligence and superior education.

Perhaps the evil consequence which has been most forcibly brought before the eyes of the public by the working of the Reform Bill, is the vast *increase of corruption* which it has induced in the borough electors. This has become so obvious that it has attracted universal

observation; and if any proof of it were requisite, it would be proved in the fact that fifty-two petitions against returns, on the ground of bribery, were presented in the Parliament elected in 1852. Nothing approaching to this was ever heard of in the worst days of the old House of Commons; and the legislature has been actively engaged in devising various remedies for so great an evil—a sure proof that none of them have had any sensible effect. It is not difficult to see that the evil is irremediable under our present institutions; for it arises from a permanent cause of irresistible force, viz., that supreme power is vested in a class accessible to bribes. As long as this continues, bribes will be expected, given, and taken. The decisive proof of this is to be found in the fact, that though petitions against borough returns have been so frequent since the Reform Bill passed, there have been none against those for counties. The reason of this is, not that the forty-shilling freeholder is inaccessible to bribes—probably he would often as willingly take them as the freeman or ten-pounder in towns—but that that class have *not the majority* in counties, and they are not bribed, because it is no man's interest to corrupt them.

154. Vast increase of corruption under the Reform Bill.

The Liberals do not attempt to deny the existence of this great and crying evil in the new borough constituencies, but they affirm that it would be removed by enlarging the constituencies so as to make bribery impossible, and introducing the ballot so as to render it useless. It may with confidence be predicted that the evil, so far from being diminished, would, as in the Roman Republic, *

155. Which evil would not be removed, but increased, by the ballot and lowering the suffrage.

* "The Decemvirs had been named, and their tables were approved by an assembly of the *centuries*, in which riches preponderated against numbers. But the tribunes soon established a more specious and popular maxim, that every citizen has an equal right to enact the laws he is bound to obey. Instead of the centuries they convened the *tribes;* and the Patricians, after an impotent struggle, submitted to the devices of an assembly in which they were confounded with the meanest plebeian. Yet as long as the tribes passed over narrow bridges, and gave their voices aloud, the conduct of each citizen was exposed to the eyes and the ears of his friends and countrymen. The insolvent

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be decidedly and greatly increased by either or both of these changes. Experience has proved in America, that neither universal suffrage nor the ballot either prevent bribery, when it is for the interest of the candidate to give it, or conceal votes. It may lower the sum required to sway the electors, but that is all. Bribery will not be lessened because £5000 is divided among 10,000 electors instead of 1000; it will only be spread over a wider surface, and extend farther its demoralising influence. The transference of seats in the legislature to a more needy class will still less obviate the evil; it will only induce the giving of bribes to those who have recourse to it, in order to open the career of fortune or avert impending insolvency. Even if the constituencies were made so large that no fortune could corrupt them, the evil would not be removed, it would only assume another and a still more dangerous form. The worst and most dangerous species of bribery is that which is practised by holding out prospects of legislative injustice and spoliation; and the nation will have little cause to congratulate itself if it escapes slipping sovereigns into electors' pockets, but induces the putting the sponge to the national debt into their hands, and untaxed spirits into their mouths.

156. Great fault of the Liberals in the way the Reform Bill was carried.

These were the great errors committed by both parties in the course of this great debate. The faults were the greater on the part of the Conservatives at its commencement, of the Liberals at its close. This was the natural result of the alternate possession of power by those two great parties; each used it while they had it, not for the general interests of the empire, but for the maintenance

debtor consulted the wishes of his creditor, the client would have blushed to oppose the views of his patron, the general was followed by his veterans, and the aspect of a grave magistrate was a living lesson to the multitude. *A new method of secret ballot* abolished the influence of fear and shame, of honour and interest, and the abuse of freedom accelerated the progress of anarchy and despotism. The Romans had aspired to be equal—they were levelled by the equality of servitude, and the dictates of Augustus were patiently ratified by the formal consent of the tribes or centuries."—GIBBON, *Decline and Fall*, chap. xliv.

or acquisition of government to themselves. But there is one step on the part of the Liberals, of a different character, and to which, now that strife is over, and all thoughts of a return to the old system are out of the question, it is the duty of the historian to give the most unqualified condemnation: this is, the way in which the Reform Bill was carried. The excitement of the people by the Liberal leaders, during the continuance of the contest, was so violent and incessant that at last they became altogether unmanageable, and they were driven by their own followers to coerce the Crown, and threaten to violate the constitution, as the only means of avoiding civil war and revolution. The English revolution was effected by means as violent, though happily bloodless, as the French; the threat of marching sixty peers into the House of Lords, to overthrow that assembly, was a measure, in substance, if not in form, as violent as the marching sixty grenadiers, on the 18th Brumaire, into the Legislative Assembly by Napoleon.

157. Danger of coercing the House of Peers.

It is remarkable that on the only occasions in English history when such an extreme measure was thought of, it was to overthrow the greatest benefactors of their country —once in the reign of Queen Anne, when twelve peers were created to destroy the Duke of Marlborough; and once in that of William IV., when sixty were threatened, to subvert the Duke of Wellington. Such precedents, if again followed by either party, will speedily destroy the British constitution, and not leave a vestige of real freedom in the land. Let them for ever, and by all parties, be considered as beacons to be avoided, not precedents to be followed. It is with pain that the Author feels himself compelled to pronounce this severe condemnation of a party at that time containing so many able and estimable men, and which, in the commencement of the strife, was clearly in the right. But the cause of truth is paramount to every other consideration. It will appear in the sequel whether the Whig party gained any

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lasting advantage, even to themselves, from this violent stretch; and it will be the more pleasing duty of the historian to award a corresponding meed of praise to their leaders, for the wisdom and moderation with which they exercised the power when they had once acquired it.

158. Wisdom of the Duke of Wellington's advice to the majority in the Peers to withdraw.

For a similar reason, the highest praise must be bestowed on the Duke of Wellington for the advice he gave the majority of the Peers, when a creation could not otherwise be averted, to withdraw, and allow the bill to pass. The Liberal historians, with praiseworthy candour, admit that, if he did wrong in his declaration against reform, he atoned for that error by the advice he gave the Peers at the close of the contest.* Great as must, by all candid men of either party, be admitted to be the evil of forcing an independent branch of the legislature, and compelling, by the threat of an unconstitutional measure, an organic change in the constitution, it is not so great as fixing a majority in the hereditary branch of the legislature by a great creation of peers, and thus rendering one House, by an act done in a moment of excitement, and in the heat of contest, permanently at variance with what may come to be the prevailing opinion of the other branch of the legislature and of the country. The lesser evil was wisely accepted, to avoid the greater. If the precedent is once established of overcoming a hostile majority in the House of Peers by a great creation, it may and probably would come to be repeated, as it has been in France, on every entire change of administration, until all respect for, or consistency in, the hereditary branch of the legislature is lost, and it becomes alternately a titled crowd of court favourites, or an obsequious mob of popular flatterers.

In a word, the fault of the Tories in this great debate, and it was no light one, was, that they used the political power which had grown up in their hands, as a property,

* "If the Duke committed a blunder on the 4th November, when he declared against all reform, he nobly redeemed his error on the 17th May, by yielding to the popular demand."—ROEBUCK, vol. ii. p. 336, note.

not a trust, and resisted to the last those changes in the representation of the Commons which time had rendered necessary, and which were essential either to insure beneficial legislation, or to diffuse contentment and satisfaction among the people. The fault of the Liberals, which was still greater, consisted in this, that when they got the power, they introduced a reform in Parliament based on erroneous principles, which destroyed one system of class legislation only to introduce another still more at variance with the interests of the majority; and, having brought it forward, forced it through by violent excitement of the people, and unconstitutional coercion of the Sovereign. The Tories, in the last extremity, in a great measure expiated their fault by the praiseworthy self-sacrifice which they made at the call of patriotic duty. The Whigs, in the moment of triumph, in some degree redeemed theirs, by the moderation with which they used the unlimited powers acquired by victory.

159. Summary of the faults on both sides.

160. The producing classes were still the majority in number and value.

If the buying and selling class had constituted in Great Britain, as they did in Athens, Holland, or Venice, the majority in number or importance of the entire empire, no one could have blamed the Liberals for framing a constitution which gave them the command of the country; for it is the fundamental principle of all popular governments that the majority in number and value must rule the minority. But what rendered the new constitution peculiarly unsuited to the British empire, and aggravated the fault of the Whigs in forcing it through, was, that the class in whom it vested supreme power was *very far indeed from being a majority either in number or wealth of the whole* inhabitants, and owed its ascendancy entirely to the command it had accidentally got of the boroughs. Out of the 27,000,000 who now inhabit the British Islands, 18,000,000 are directly or indirectly dependent on land for their support, and only 9,000,000 on all the branches of commerce and manufactures put together. Of the income-tax, £2,700,000 is paid by the land, and

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not £1,700,000 by trades and professions. Two-thirds of the inhabitants are dependent on the producing interests; two-thirds of the direct revenue is paid by them; but nevertheless they are deprived of all real influence in the legislature; and the minority, intrenched in the boroughs, have been enabled to carry through a series of measures destructive of their best interests. If the colonies, wholly unrepresented by the Reform Bill, are considered as distant provinces of the empire, this disproportion will appear still greater; and less than a half in number, and a third in wealth, actuated by an adverse interest, have got the command of both.

161. The Reform Bill has strengthened Government by enlarging its basis.

It must be considered as a decided set-off to these manifold evils that the Reform Bill has obviously and greatly strengthened Government as a government, irrespective of the divisions of party. So nearly balanced, indeed, are the two parties into which the country is divided, that great weakness of *administration* in the House of Commons has in general been the characteristic of the times since it became law; but this is quite a different thing from any weakness of the Government itself. It has afforded rather a proof of the truth of De Tocqueville's observation, that the danger of democracy is not its weakness, but its tremendous strength. The frequent conspiracies which took place between 1815 and 1830, and which had for their object to overturn the Government by violence, have been almost unknown since the Reform Bill passed. Even the terrible storm of 1848 failed to shake the steady fabric of the British monarchy. Queen Victoria put down the efforts of factions in 1848 without firing a shot, when all the Continental monarchies were falling around her. No man can affirm with confidence that this auspicious result would have taken place had the old government of the nomination boroughs been still in force. It is one thing to weaken the rule of two or three hundred holders of seats in the House of Commons; it is another, and a very dif-

ferent thing, to overthrow nine hundred thousand electors, practically and really wielding the powers of government. Their number renders the attempt hopeless; their ranks embrace those who would have been the most formidable leaders of revolution. The forces of democracy are turned over to the other side.

162. Where the risk now lies.

The risk, however, has been changed rather than wholly removed by this alteration. There is little danger now, comparatively speaking, that our monarchical frame of government, resting on the basis of so numerous and influential a mass of electors, will be overthrown by a violent convulsion; but great, that one portion of these electors, having the majority, may use their power to advance their own interests, without any regard to the effect their measures may have upon those of the minority of the electors, or the immense majority of the unrepresented portion of the community. This, accordingly, is what has taken place since the Reform Bill became the law of the land. The middle classes have made no movement to advance farther in the career of reform since they obtained it; they are satisfied with the power they have got, as well they may, since it has enabled them to rule the State. But they have set themselves sedulously and energetically to improve their victory to their own advantage by fiscal exemptions and legislative measures, and they have done this so effectually as to have created a sullen state of hostility between the employers and the employed, which breaks out at times, like the flames of a volcano, in ruinous strikes, and annually drives above three hundred thousand labourers, chiefly rural, into exile. The danger is no longer to the Government, but to a large portion of the governed; it is to be found, not in the streets, but the senate-house; not in insurrections, but in the ruin of entire classes, by laws passed with the concurrence of King, Lords, and Commons. But great as this danger is, and clearly as its reality has been demonstrated by the history of

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the last twenty years, it is much less than that arising from a successful revolution, which at once destroys all liberty, and establishes the reign of unbridled violence; and, at all events, it is the state of things suitable for an advanced state of society. It is the price which civilised man pays for the incalculable blessings of general freedom and internal peace.

163. Way in which the monied classes had got the command of the producing.

It appears, at first sight, not a little surprising how a change of this sort could by possibility have been brought about in a free country, in opposition to influences formerly so strongly seated as those of production were in the old constitution. But a little consideration must show how it was that this came to pass. In the first place, the monetary system and free-trade measures, in which the persons depending on that interest had so cordially concurred, had halved their own fortunes and doubled those of their opponents; had rendered labour worth a shilling a-day instead of two shillings, and one sovereign worth two sovereigns. This had both entirely altered the relative strength of the two parties, and induced such discontent among those interested in production, as rendered them in their desperation ready for any change. In the next place, the best informed statistician[1] has shown that, since the peace, the savings of the nation have been on an average £50,000,000 a-year, by far the greater part of which accumulated in the hands of the trading and middle class in town, who lent great part of it out in mortgages to the declining landlords, who could not otherwise maintain their former establishments, and would not reduce them. The strength and importance of the monied class was thus as much increased as that of the *producing* was diminished.

[1] Mr Porter, Secretary to Board of Trade.

In the third place, the same respectable authority has shown that the sum annually spent by the working classes in Great Britain in beer and spirits is £50,000,000 a-year—a state of things which keeps them in a condi-

tion of constant practical vassalage to their employers, and deprives them of all influence in the State, excepting that arising in periods of excitement from the terror of their aggregate numbers. These facts at once explain how political power and the rule of the State has slipped from the hands of both these classes. It is not upon the amount of revenue enjoyed or produce created by a class that its political importance in the long run depends, but upon the proportions of the income enjoyed by it which is clear of debt, and of realised capital, which can at once be rendered available in a contest, either by swaying seats in Parliament or influencing the press.

164. Enormous sums spent by working classes in Great Britain on drink.

As this ascendancy of the monied class in Great Britain is obviously the result of the magnitude of our realised wealth, and that again has arisen from the liberty and prosperity we have so long enjoyed, and the unexampled success with which the war was attended, a very curious and in some respect melancholy consideration presents itself. Is this change, and the check to the interests of industry thence arising, the effect of a general and irresistible law of nature, applicable to all times when similar circumstances arise, or is it the result of a casual combination of events in the British Islands during the last half-century? Is the transference of power from the land to the boroughs in England analogous to and produced by the same causes as that which removed power from the Roman senate, the stronghold of the patricians, to the Dictator, the representative and idol of the urban multitude? and is the clamour for cheap bread, which in our times has changed the whole policy of the empire at bottom, the same as the cry, "*Panem et Circenses!*" which ruled the whole policy of the Cæsars, and in the end, by destroying the rural population in its heart, subverted the Roman Empire? If so, are we to rest in the mournful conclusion that the seeds of mortality are indelibly implanted in nations as well as individuals; that these seeds are quickened into life equally by victory and defeat, and

165. Is this the result of a general law of nature?

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that to both the lines of the poet are precisely applicable—

> "The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
> And all that virtue, all that wealth ere gave,
> Await alike the inevitable hour:
> The paths of glory lead but to the grave?"

166. Great political truth evolved by the Reform Bill.

Without pronouncing decidedly on this deeply interesting question, upon which the world is as yet too young to form a conclusion that can be relied on, there is one truth which has been completely demonstrated by the constitutional experience in the last times, both of France and England, of permanent importance to mankind, and which will largely benefit the future generations of men. This is, that a *uniform representation is but another name for class government, and that the governing class will always be found in that which is immediately above the lowest line of the suffrage.* In France, when the line, under the Restoration, was drawn by the payment of £12 a-year of direct taxes, that ruling class was found in sixty thousand of the richest proprietors in the country, but the poorest in the enfranchised class—those paying from £12 to £20 direct taxes, who were two-thirds of the ninety thousand electors. In England, by the Reform Bill, supreme power was vested in persons in boroughs paying from £10 to £20 rent; that is, the buying and selling class, interested chiefly in beating down the cost of production.

167. Its exemplification in France and England.

Thence a rigid system of protection in the former country, which produced such discontent among the urban consumers as overturned the governments both of the elder and younger branch of the house of Bourbon; thence an amount of suffering in the producing classes in the latter, that has sent above three hundred thousand of the working class, for a course of years, annually out of the country, stopped the growth of its population, and caused its colonial provinces to take open steps to effect their independence. These events will not be lost upon posterity. The ruin of constitutional freedom in France,

the dissolution of the colonial empire of Great Britain, will be cheaply purchased if they impress upon mankind the eternal truths, that a real representation in government is the essential need of civilised man, and can never be refused without imminent danger; that uniformity in the suffrage inevitably induces class government; that the ruinous nature of such government is in the direct proportion of the number admitted into the class; and that *the only way to avoid these evils is* CLASS REPRESENTATION. The Roman system of giving every citizen a vote, but a vote only in his own century, and ruling the state by the votes *of the centuries, not the citizens*, was the nearest approach to perfection in popular government ever yet made by man, and, beyond all doubt, gave them the empire of the world.

168. Great law of nature on the subject.

The true cause of the difficulties which have been felt as so embarrassing, both in the British and French empires, in the late stage of their political life, when the formation of a new constitution in both was set about, is the operation of a great law of nature, intended to limit the growth of empires, and promote the dispersion of mankind. This law is the simple fact, that whatever is plentiful becomes cheap, and money the very first of all things. The necessary effect of this is, that labour becomes dear in the rich and old state, and the necessaries of life are raised at a more costly rate than in poor countries, where money is more scarce, and labour is cheap. The reciprocity system, the contraction of the currency, the free trade, were all efforts on the part of the monied classes to elude the operation of this law of nature; to render production cheap, when the circumstances of society had rendered it dear. The effect of this difference of price between the cost of raising provisions in the old and young state is, that if the country has the majority, a strict system of protection is established, to keep out the cheap food; if the towns, free trade and the cheapening system is introduced, to let it in.

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169. Which is intended to limit population in the later stages of society.

In either case a limit is imposed, when this difference of price has become considerable, to the growth of the state and the extension of its population: in the one case by the check given to the industry of towns by dear corn, in the other to the inhabitants of the country by cheap; in the former case by the rivalry of foreign manufacturers, in the latter by that of foreign cultivators. France has recently exhibited an example of the former; Rome in ancient, and Great Britain in modern times, are instances of the latter: and the prodigious transference now going on of the Anglo-Saxon race to America, attended by such vast effects to both hemispheres, is an illustration of the all-powerful agency of this cause upon the fortunes of mankind. However much we may be disposed to regret this when our own country alone is considered, we shall regard it in a very different light when the general progress of the species is taken into view, and look upon it as the great means by which Providence, at the appointed season, arrests the growth of aged communities, transfers the seeds of prosperity to distant lands, provides an outlet to over-peopled communities, and lays the foundations in present suffering of the general dispersion and happiness of mankind.

# CHAPTER XXIV.

## FRANCE AND EUROPE FROM THE ACCESSION OF LOUIS PHILIPPE IN 1830, TO THE OVERTHROW OF THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS IN THE SAME YEAR.

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1. Objects to which great popular movements have been directed.

As great popular movements, such as the first French Revolution, or the Reform passion in England, never arise but from the experience of serious public evils, so they never fail to terminate, when successful, in the removal of what appeared to have been the cause, and generally was so, of the public suffering. The insurrection of 1789 was occasioned by the pride of the noblesse, and directed against the distinctions of rank; and it terminated in their abolition. The reform movement of England was induced by the selfish policy of the holders of realised wealth, and it was directed against the borough proprietors, through whom their power had been exercised; and it led to their abolition. The Revolution of 1830 was occasioned by the dread of Jesuitical usurpation, and was meant to assert the freedom of thought; and it was directed against Charles X. and Prince Polignac, who were conceived to be the instruments in the hands of that party. They accordingly were overthrown, and the throne of France remained open, exposed to become the prize of some fortunate soldier, some audacious demagogue.

But it is by no means equally certain that a successful revolution will remove the real evils which afflict society, or that, even if it does really eradicate those which have

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2. The real evils of society are not so certainly removed by these convulsions.

previously been experienced, it may not induce others still more widespread and irremediable. The remedy is sometimes worse than the disease. The warmest partisans of the Revolution now admit that it has done little for the real causes of human distress, and that under another name, and belonging to a different class, the oppressors of mankind have reappeared with undiminished power on the theatre of human events. The guillotine of the Committee of Public Salvation, the confiscations of the Convention, the revolutionary law of succession, had destroyed the great proprietors, and rendered impossible the reconstruction of their estates; but they had done nothing for the condition of the workmen, or the interests of the twenty-five millions of rural cultivators. On the contrary their condition had become greatly worse than it was before the convulsions began; for the destruction of capital had deprived industry of support, the division of income had halved its market. Nothing remained to the poor but the cultivation of their little bits of land, for the most part unequal to the support of a family, and the fruits of which were wrenched from them by the ruinous land-tax, often amounting to 20 per cent, but which was altogether irremovable, for it had become the main stay of the revenue of the state.

Prosperity of the bourgeois class.

In the general confusion produced by the destruction of mercantile and the confiscation of landed property, one class only had prospered, and exhibited the signs of general prosperity, amidst the penury with which it was surrounded. All the little wealth that remained in the provinces had been amassed in the hands of the merchants and shopkeepers; and in Paris the bankers and bourgeois class had been immensely enriched by the effects of the very pacification which to the nation generally had been the occasion of such bitter mortification. The bankers of the Chaussée d'Antin, the jewellers of the Palais Royal, the dressmakers of the Rue St Honoré, had for the most part made large fortunes from

the expenditure of foreigners, chiefly English and Russians, who had flocked to Paris during the Restoration. Nor was this prosperity in that class confined to the metropolis; it had extended also to the principal commercial and manufacturing towns. The silk-manufacturers of Lyons, the wine-merchants of Epernay and Bordeaux, the cotton-spinners of Rouen, had been enriched by the increasing demand for their various productions springing from the long peace of the Continent, and the growth of wealth which had in consequence taken place both in France and the adjoining states. In a word, the bourgeoisie of France had risen into wealth and importance during the peace; an importance arising not less from its own prosperity, than from the contrast afforded by the general penury with which it was surrounded.

4. The interests of the bourgeoisie were adverse to those of labour.

But from this very prosperity had arisen another evil, which shook the very foundations of society, and induced a series of causes and effects that imbittered and at length terminated the reign of the succeeding sovereign. The bourgeois in towns, thus powerful by means of their wealth, their sway in elections, and their influence with the press, of which they were the chief, often the sole readers, had no interests in common with labour; on the contrary, their interests were adverse to it. Living by trade in goods or money, their interest was to buy cheap and sell dear; the very reverse of the workman, whose interest was to produce dear and buy cheap. Their chief, often their only purchasers, were found among the dwellers in towns: the six millions of peasants, living on freeholds which yielded them from £2 to £10 each, took little or nothing off their hands in the way of purchases. Hence the policy which the Government pursued to please the one, necessarily gave dissatisfaction to the other. The working classes trusted to the promises of the popular leaders, and the representations of the press generally supported the movement which overthrew Charles X. and acquiesced in the installation of the Citizen King. But

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they soon discovered their mistake, and long and bitter were the regrets which the discovery occasioned. The reign of Louis Philippe was nothing but a long contest between labour and capital—between the interests of production and those of consumption; and the animosity between these different classes in the end became so great that it overturned his throne, and for a brief season established that of "Liberté, Egalité, et Fraternité" in its stead.

5. Effect of the spread of machinery, steam, and railways.

This direful social contest, the most widespread which can agitate any community, was rendered the more violent in France at this period from the effect of the immense discoveries which they were compelled to adopt from their industrious neighbours. Steam was then altering the face of the world; the discovery of Watt was changing the destinies of mankind. However much the powers of that mighty agent and the multiplication of machinery may augment the industrial capabilities of a nation, and add to the sum total of its wealth, it is in vain to assert that in the first instance at least it is not a very great drawback to the interests of labour. If one man or woman can be brought by the aid of machinery to do the work of fifty men, what is to become of the remaining forty-nine, especially in a country which has no colonies or external outlets for its industry? The entire produce may be greatly increased by such application, but it never can be so in anything like the proportion in which the demand for labour is diminished. The common sense and experience of mankind have everywhere taught them the sophistry of the hackneyed arguments put forth on this subject by the economical writers on the side of the capitalists, whose interest is cheap production; and thence the constant hostility of the working classes in every country to the introduction of the machinery by which their labour is to be supplanted. Perhaps in the end the rival interests of capital and labour may be adjusted, and the workmen thrown out by machinery in one line may find

employment in another; but this can only be the work of time, and of a very gradual absorption of industry under the most favourable circumstances. And in France the circumstances, so far from being favourable, were just the reverse; for the Revolution had at once destroyed the capital, swept away the colonies, and all but ruined the commerce of the country; and the various vents which might take off the displaced labour of the nation were wholly awanting. Hence the eighteen years from 1830 to 1848 were a period of almost ceaseless industrial distress in France, and the animosity of the working classes against the government of Louis Philippe was, almost from its very commencement, far greater than it had been against that of Charles X.

6. Increased strength of the Government.

The same circumstances, however, which so fearfully augmented this general discontent amongst the working-classes, increased in a still greater degree the strength of the Government to resist it. As long as the monarchy stood on the remnant of the nobility and the increasing *Parti-prêtre*, as it did during the reign of Charles X., it rested on a flimsy foundation; the pyramid of society was based on its head. But when the numerous and opulent ranks of the bourgeoisie were admitted into the administration, and interested in its preservation, a very different state of things presented itself. Government now stood upon a much wider basis, and could calculate on the support of a more numerous and energetic body of men. The dense and thriving ranks of the bourgeoisie, interested in power because they shared its spoils, gave it their cordial support; their wealth was poured into its coffers; their youth filled the ranks of its National Guard; their influence gave it the command of the legislature.

7. Dangers to which this led.

But this very circumstance, while for long it secured their ascendancy, in the end exposed it to ruin. A class of society which had come to monopolise, in return for its support, the whole patronage of Government, ere long became the object of envy. Louis Philippe experienced

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the truth of the old saying, that every place given away made three discontented and one ungrateful. Even the commissions in an army soon raised to 400,000 men, an expenditure increased from 900,000,000 francs (£36,000,000) to 1,500,000,000 (£60,000,000), and the 130,000 civil offices in the gift of the Tuileries, could not suffice for the wants of a nation in which Government employment had become, from the effects of the Revolution, the sole means of advancement. The rule of the bourgeoisie was overthrown in the end in France, from the same jealousy of those excluded from its emoluments which had proved fatal to that of the borough-holders in England. Influence—in other words, corruption—became the great engine of administration; M. Guizot avowed and vindicated it upon the ground that, as all other influences were gone, that of selfish motives alone remained to uphold the Government. But their mode of proceeding, however effective for a time, could not durably continue; for no system can be permanent which is founded on class influence or interest.

8. The Republicans: their chances of success.

When the government of Charles X. was overthrown, and he himself driven into exile, three parties remained in France, and divided society between them. So equally were they balanced, and so narrowly were the chances of each poised, that it was hard to say with whom, in the scramble for power, the supreme authority would ultimately rest. Most formidable from their resolution, and the command which physical strength gave them of the metropolis, the REPUBLICANS stood foremost on the stage, and, to all appearance, were destined to carry off the prize. They had made the Revolution; it was their spirit which had animated the masses, and thrown a hundred thousand armed workmen on the streets of Paris; to all appearance, the crown and the government were at their disposal. Perhaps, if they had possessed a leader of greater ambition or resolution, they might have secured it, and a new republic have restored, for a brief season, the reign

of anarchy in France, to be speedily supplanted by the vigour of despotism. But great as the chances of this party were, it had to contend with as great difficulties. The recollection of the Convention, the Reign of Terror, weighed like an incubus on its energies. The working classes, especially in the great towns, were nearly unanimous in its favour; but it is not by that class alone that a change of government ever has been or ever can be effected. Leaders are required to direct its strength, capital to support its efforts, general concurrence to sanction its undertakings. These were all awanting to the Republicans of 1830. The bankers had not risked their capital to let the fruits of the struggle be reaped by the *prolétaires;* the journalists were not disposed to cede their places in the cabinet to the workmen; the shopkeepers dreaded a stoppage of their sales, and the termination of the lucrative purchases of the English, from the establishment of a republic. All these classes were extremely willing to use the workmen as auxiliaries, and to take advantage of their courage and numbers to overthrow the Bourbons; and they lauded, on every occasion, their valour and patriotism to the skies; but they had no intention of sharing the fruits of victory with them.

9. The Napoleonists: their chances.

The next party which stood prepared to dispute the palm with the Republicans was the NAPOLEONISTS; but their chances at that period were decidedly inferior. They had, indeed, in their favour the mighty name of the Emperor, and the magic of his glorious exploits; but though they spoke powerfully to the imagination of the young and ardent part of the people, their influence generally was by no means so great as it has since become. The reason was, these events were too near; distance had *not* "lent enchantment to the view." All men of middle age could recollect the double capture of Paris; a third visit of the Cossacks was present to every full-grown imagination. Add to this, that the King of Rome, sunk down into the modest title of Duke of Leuchtenberg, was ab-

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sent, under Austrian influence, in whose service he held a regiment, and no visible member of the Imperial family was at hand to direct or encourage its partisans. The party of the Republicans was based on a principle, but that of Napoleon II. was rested on a man; and without the man a personal party can seldom make any successful effort.

10. The Orléanists: their chances.

If the Napoleonists wanted a head and wealth to sustain their exertions, this could not be said of the ORLEANISTS, who had both the one and the other. The Duke of Orléans had obtained, from the generous munificence of Charles X., the entire restoration of the immense estates of the family, and his expenditure, though great, was still within his ample income. Throughout all the phases of the Revolution, a considerable party had adhered to this family, and it had been much increased on the Restoration, from the apparent stability of the throne, and the obvious chances of succession which they enjoyed from the precarious life of the infant Duke of Bordeaux, who alone stood between them and its acquisition. To this party the unwise proceedings of Charles X. and the *Parti-prêtre* had long been the subject of close observation and intense interest, and his fall seemed, as the death of the Duke of Bordeaux would have done, at once to open the crown to their ambition. The Duke himself was irresolute, and undecided between the attractions of a diadem and the perils with which it was environed. But no similar terrors or qualms of conscience paralysed his adherents, who, relieved of all responsibility consequent on the change of government, expected only to enjoy its rewards. M. Lafitte, and the chief bankers and capitalists of Paris, belonged to this party, from the very obvious reason, that, by placing the Duke of Orléans on the throne, they would be placing themselves in the administration. They had powerful support from M. Guizot, M. Thiers, and other able journalists, who also hoped to share in the spoils of victory, and, in

truth, saw no other mode of escape from the distracted state of the country. The example of England spoke powerfully to the historic intellects of this influential class of politicians; and it seemed to them almost an indication of providential will, that, when the elder branch of the Bourbons, like the Stuarts, had lost the throne by the ambition of the Romish party, a younger branch should remain to open to France a future of freedom and prosperity.

11. The Duke of Orléans remains in retirement.

During these anxious days, big with the fate of France and of Europe, the Duke of Orléans remained in privacy and obscurity in the neighbourhood of Paris. He was neither at the Tuileries, where honour and duty called him to stand by his sovereign and benefactor in the hour of danger, nor at the Hôtel de Ville, where ambition and selfishness might possibly open to him the path to a throne by the overthrow of that benefactor. Accurately informed by M. Lafitte and his other partisans of everything that was going forward in the capital, he yet kept aloof from its stirring scenes, and seemed anxious only, in his elegant retirement of Neuilly, to detach himself from the political struggles in which, more than any human being in existence, he was himself interested. In this there was no affectation; he really felt the wish to abstain from the strife which his conduct indicated. He was consumed with anxiety, fearful to take any decided step, and desirous to receive the impress of events rather than impress his signet-mark upon them.

12. Important conversation between the Baron de Glandevès and Lafitte.

On the morning of the 30th July, when the contest was obviously decided, and it was necessary to fix upon a government, M. Glandevès, the Governor of the Tuileries, waited on M. Lafitte, when the following conversation took place between them. "Sir," said the baron to the banker, "you have now been master of Paris for twenty-four hours—do you wish to save the monarchy?" "Which monarchy, sir—that of 1789 or 1814?" "The constitutional monarchy." "To save it, only one way

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remains, which is to crown the Duke of Orléans." "The Duke of Orléans! The Duke of Orléans—but do you know him?" "For fifteen years." "Well, but what are his titles to the crown? That boy whom Vienna has educated can at least invoke the memory of his father's glory; and it must be admitted the passage of Napoleon has written his annals in characters of fire upon the minds of men. But what prestige surrounds the Duke of Orléans?—do the people even know his history? How many of them have heard his name?" "I see in that a recommendation, and not a disadvantage. Destitute of all influence over the imagination, he will be the less able to emancipate himself from the limits within which a constitutional monarch must confine himself. His private life is free from the scandalous immoralities which have disgraced so many other princes. He has respected himself in his wife; he has made himself respected and loved by his children."

13. Arguments for and against the Duke's being called to the crown.

"These are mere domestic virtues, which are not to be recompensed by a crown.—Are you ignorant that he is openly accused of having approved the homicidal votes of his father, and associated himself, in the evil days of our history, with projects calculated to exclude for ever from the throne the direct heirs of the unfortunate Louis, and of having preserved a mysterious attitude in London during the Hundred Days, which has given rise to strange suspicions? Since 1815 he has alternately caressed all parties, been at once the humble servant of the court and the secret fomentor of all intrigues. Louis XVIII. restored to him his vast estates; Charles X. made it a personal request to the Chambers to secure them to him by a legal and irrefragable right; he conferred upon him the title of 'Royal Highness,' so long coveted. Overwhelmed by gifts and kindnesses from the elder branch, how can he seize upon their inheritance?—and could he even permit others to light the conflagration which must

in the end consume his own family?" "It is not in the personal interest of the Duke, baron, but in that of the country threatened with anarchy, that I speak. I do not ask if the situation of the Duke of Orléans is painful to his own feelings, but whether his accession to the throne is desirable for France. What prince is more free from the prejudices which have occasioned the ruin of Charles X.? What prince has more openly professed liberal sentiments? and to the combination which would crown him, what other is preferable?"[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, Dix Ans de Louis Philippe, i. 296, 300.

Such, put in a dramatic form, after the manner of the ancient historians, were the ideas which at this crisis were fermenting in the minds of the most influential men in France. M. de Talleyrand inclined to the opinion of M. de Chateaubriand, which was, that the only way to reconcile the conflicting interests of order and democracy in France, would be to respect the right of the Duke of Bordeaux, who was entirely free from his grandfather's fault, and to intrust his education, with the lieutenancy-general of the kingdom, to the experienced wisdom and popular sentiments of the Duke of Orléans. But this arrangement, which was that which honour and ultimate interest prescribed, was far from meeting the views of the journalists and literary men, who looked to the triumph of a public party as the means of gratifying private ambition, and the fall of a dynasty as the elevation of a fortune. M. Béranger, despite his strong prepossessions in favour of the Napoleonists, and his indignant acerbities against the Bourbons, became the decided partisan of the Orléans party, and promised them the aid of his heart-stirring songs and immense popularity; while M. Thiers, Mignet, and Laréguy, put at their disposal the equally important contribution of their business talent and statesmanlike experience.[2]

14. Project of giving the lieutenancy-general to the Duke of Orléans, and the crown to the Duke of Bordeaux.

[2] Louis Blanc, i. 301, 302; Capefigue, Histoire de Louis Philippe, ii. 29, 31.

By these three journalists a proclamation in favour of the Duke of Orléans was drawn up, which was published

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in the *National*, *Courrier Français*, and *Commerce*. When placarded, and distributed in and around the *Bourse*, it excited no enthusiasm, and was very coldly received. Meanwhile M. de Lafayette, seated on a huge arm-chair at the Hôtel de Ville, was a prey to the most cruel anxieties. The Duke de Chartres, eldest son of the Duke of Orléans, had been arrested at Montrouge, and the old general hardly knew whether to maintain his arrest or order his liberation, and after much hesitation he was prevailed on to do the latter. But meanwhile the Orléanists, presided over by M. Lafitte, were rapidly proceeding to action; they had the immense advantage over their adversaries of order, arrangement, and decision. At ten o'clock a meeting of the Orléanists took place at the hotel of M. Lafitte, when a proclamation, skilfully drawn, was agreed to, recommending the Duke of Orléans to the vacant throne, and M. Carrel was despatched to Rouen to gain over that important city to the same interest.* Shortly after, General Dubourg, on the part of the Republicans at the Hôtel de Ville, presented himself to the meeting: they refused to receive or even to see him, so rapidly had the pretensions and ideas of government advanced since the resolution to establish a republic had been taken![1]

15. First placards in the Orléans interest.

[1] Louis Blanc, i. 305, 306; Ann. Hist. 1830, 74, 75; Cap. ii. 36, 37.

While matters were advancing so rapidly in his favour in Paris, the Duke of Orléans remained at Neuilly with

* "Charles X. can never again enter France; he has caused the blood of the people to flow.

"The Republic would expose us to frightful divisions, and embroil us with all Europe.

"The Duke of Orléans is a prince devoted to the cause of the Revolution.

"The Duke of Orléans has never fought against us; he was at Jemappes.

"The Duke of Orléans is a citizen-king.

"The Duke of Orléans carried in fire the tricolor flag; no other can carry it. We will have no other.

"The Duke of Orléans has not yet pronounced himself. He awaits the expression of our wishes. Let us proclaim them, and he will accept the Charter, as we have always expected and wished. It is from the French people that he will receive his crown."—LOUIS BLANC, vol. i. pp. 305, 306.

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his whole family. In his immediate vicinity, at Puteaux, was a body of troops, a squadron of which could with ease have made them all prisoners. But so little suspicion was entertained at that period of their fidelity, that no precaution against them was taken by the royal family, nor did a feeling of anxiety on this subject ever cross their minds. M. Lafitte, the evening before, wrote a letter mentioning that the crown was to be offered to him, and that, in case of refusal, it would be represented that it was essential to the tranquillity of the capital and the country that he should be conveyed to a place of safety * in the metropolis. This note instructed his partisans in Paris in the course which they should pursue; and accordingly, soon after, M. Thiers and M. Scheffer, preceded by M. Sébastiani, arrived at Neuilly to offer the Duke the crown. He himself was absent, but they were received by the Duchess of Orléans, and history may well record the conversation which took place between them.[1]

16. Situation of the Duke of Orléans.

[1] Louis Blanc, i. 307, 308.

"Sir," said the Duchess, in a voice trembling with emotion, after the purpose of his mission had been explained by M. Scheffer, "how could you undertake such a mission? That M. Thiers should have charged himself with it, I can understand. He little knew us; but you, who have been admitted to our intimacy, who knew us so well—ah! we can never forgive it." Stupefied by a reception they had so little anticipated, the two envoys remained silent, and a pause ensued, during which Madame Adélaide, the Duke's sister, entered the apart-

17. Interview between M. Thiers and the Duchess of Orléans.

* "Le Duc d'Orléans est à Neuilly avec toute sa famille. Près de lui à Puteaux sont les troupes royales, et il suffirait d'un ordre émané de la cour pour l'enlever à la nation, qui peut trouver en lui un gage puissant de sa sécurité future. On propose de se rendre chez lui au nom des autorités constituées convenablement accompagnées, *et de lui* offrir la couronne. S'il oppose des scrupules de famille ou de délicatesse, on lui dira que son séjour à Paris importe à la tranquillité de la capitale et de la France, et qu'on est obligé de l'y mettre en sûreté. On peut compter sur l'infaillibilité de cette mesure. On peut être certain en outre que le Duc d'Orléans ne tardera pas à s'associer pleinement aux vœux de la nation."—Louis Blanc, i. 307, 308.

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ment, followed by Madame de Montjoie. Penetrated with the dangers which surrounded them on all sides, and appreciating with masculine intelligence their extent, she immediately said, "Let them make my brother a president, a commander of the National Guard—anything, so as they do not make him a proscribed." "Madame," rejoined M. Thiers, "it is a throne which we come to offer him." "But what will Europe think?" rejoined the Princess. "Shall he seat himself on the throne from which Louis XVI. descended to mount the scaffold? What a panic will it strike into all royal houses! The peace of the world will be endangered." "These apprehensions, Madame," replied M. Thiers, "are natural, but they are not well founded. England, full of the recollection of the banished Stuarts, will applaud a *dénouement* of which her history furnished the example and the model. And as to the absolute monarchies, far from reproaching the Duke of Orléans for fixing on his head a crown floating on the storm, they will approve a step which will render his elevation a barrier against the unchained passions of the multitude. There is something great and worth saving in France; and if it is too late for legitimacy, it is not so for a constitutional throne. After all, there remains to the Duke of Orléans only a choice of danger; and, in the existing state of affairs, to fly the possible dangers of royalty is to face a republic and its inevitable tempests."[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, i. 309, 310.

18. Irresolute conduct of the Duke of Orléans.

These energetic words made no impression on the Duchess of Orléans, in whose elevated mind the chivalrous sentiments were paramount to all considerations of ambition or expedience. But Madame Adélaïde, vividly impressed with her brother's danger, was more accessible to them. "A child of Paris," she exclaimed, "I will intrust myself to the Parisians!" It was agreed to send for the Duke, who had fled to Raincy; and he soon after set out, preceded by M. de Montesquiou, for Paris. Before they reached the capital, however, the Duke turned

about and returned to Raincy as fast as his horses could carry him. Irresolute and timid, he had neither courage enough to seize the crown which was offered to him, nor virtue sufficient to refuse it. His life, for many years, had been passed in meditating on the crisis which had now arrived, and when it came he proved unequal to it. Temporisation was his entire policy—to escape danger, by flying from it, his great object. His system was, never to appear to court popularity, but to preserve such a demeanour as might compel others to seek him, not bring him forward as seeking them. He would gladly have declined the crown, if he had been sure of retaining his estates. The most powerful argument for accepting it was, that only by doing so could he save his property. The decisive moment did not appear to him to have yet arrived, and his old irresolution continued.[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, i. 310, 311.

19. Meetings of the Deputies and Peers.

Meanwhile everything had been prepared at Paris by his partisans for the expected arrival of the Duke, and M. Lafitte had already spread the report that everything was ready for his installation; that he was the man of the age, and could alone prevent the return of despotism, and put a bridle on the passions of democracy. A meeting of the deputies took place at the Hôtel Bourbon, at which he was chosen president by acclamation. M. Hyde de Neuville was alone seen on the benches reserved for the Royalists,—so completely had terror mastered all minds, and banished the most resolute courage. The Peers, on their side, met in the Luxembourg, and their benches exhibited a fuller attendance. While the deputies were still assembled, news arrived that fifteen hundred troops from Rouen were marching on Paris, and had already reached the heights of Montmartre, which they had occupied with several pieces of cannon. Terror immediately seized every breast; and at this very moment M. de Sussy entered, bearing in his hand the last ordinances of Charles X., which recalled the former one that had excited so much animosity, and dismissed the Polignac

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Ministry. The alarm of M. Lafitte was evident. If read, they would have been hailed with acclamation, and at once destroyed the hopes of the Orléanists. Anxiety and irresolution were general, when the deputies sent to Neuilly returned with the account of their gracious reception by the princess. They then adopted the following resolution, which, with some difficulty, was adopted, and sent off to the Duke: "The deputies at present at Paris conceive that it is essential to pray his royal highness the Duke of Orléans to come immediately to Paris, to exercise the functions of lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and to express the universal wish that the tricolor flag should be resumed. They feel also the necessity of assuring France, without delay, in the approaching session of the Chambers, of the adoption of such measures as may afford the guarantees essential for the full and entire execution of the charter."[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, i. 313, 314; Cap. ii. 118, 120.

20. Meeting at the Chamber of Peers.

Meanwhile, at the Luxembourg, more elevated sentiments were uttered by the few peers who in that crisis were worthy of their dignity. Chateaubriand arrived there surrounded by an enthusiastic crowd, and carried aloft by ardent youths, who expected to see in the intrepid defender of the freedom of the press the vehement assailant of the monarchy. They little knew the intrepidity and fidelity of his character. Seated apart from his colleagues, silent and contemplative, he seemed a prey to the melancholy thoughts which oppressed him. Suddenly he rose up, and said, in an animated voice, "Let us protest in favour of the ancient monarchy. If needs be, let us leave Paris; but wherever we may be driven, let us save the King, and surrender ourselves to the trust of a courageous fidelity. Let us reflect on the liberty of the press. If the question comes to be the salvation of legitimacy, give me a pen and two months; I will restore the throne."[2] Vain illusion! In a few minutes the deputies of the bourgeois entered and demanded the crown for Louis Philippe, and few voices were raised among the

[2] Louis Blanc, i. 313, 314; Cap. ii. 122, 124.

peers of France in behalf of their ancient monarchs! In a corrupted age, decay first appears in the most elevated stations: if fidelity is to be looked for, it is among those who have not been exposed to their temptations.

21. Reunion of the Republicans at Lointier's.

But while the peers and deputies were in this manner disposing of the crown of France, a formidable opposition was arising among the Republicans, and the chances of success were almost equally balanced on both sides. A meeting of ardent Jacobins sat in permanence at the Restaurateur Lointier's in the Rue St Honoré, and they were prepared to adopt the most audacious resolutions. Knowledge, fortune, reputation, resources, all were awanting to them, but that was the very thing which constituted their strength. They had arms in their hands and courage in their hearts: prepared for death, they were not less so for command. In vain Béranger and the Orléans agents strove to win them over to their side. They steadily resisted the seduction, and a ferocious debate ensued, in the course of which a pistol was discharged at an Orléanist orator, which wounded him in the cheek. At length the following address was agreed to, and sent by a deputation to the provisional government at the Hôtel de Ville: "The people yesterday have reconquered their rights at the price of their blood. The most precious of these rights is that of choosing their form of government. It is necessary to take care that no proclamation should be issued which designs the form even of the government which may be chosen. A provisional representation of the nation exists; let it continue till the wishes of the majority of Frenchmen are known."[1]

[1] Moniteur, Aug. 31, 1830; Louis Blanc, i. 317, 318.

22. Scene at the Hôtel de Ville.

The deputies, after making their way through the crowd which filled the Place de Grève, were admitted to General Lafayette. The veteran general, who was himself undecided what course to pursue, received them with a long and studied harangue, in which he spoke, with the garrulous vanity of an old man, of America, the National Guard of 1789, and the part he had borne in the first

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Revolution. He was still descanting on his former services to the cause of freedom, when M. de Sussy was introduced with the new ordinances of Charles X., which had been refused admittance at the Chamber of Deputies. No sooner was their import disclosed by the veteran general, than a cry arose, "We are betrayed! What! new ministers named by Charles X.! No, no; we are done with the Bourbons." Such was their fury, that one of the Republicans, M. Bastide, flew at M. de Sussy, and tried to throw him out of the window. "What are you doing?" cried M. Trélat, holding him back—"a negotiator!" Trembling for the consequences, M. de Lafayette invited M. de Sussy to withdraw and go to the Municipal Council in the same edifice, which he accordingly did. A frightful tumult arose as he withdrew, and the last words which reached his ears were, "Carry back your ordinances: we are done with Charles X." A proclamation was soon after read, amidst general applause, which had been proposed at the Municipal Council, and expressed in clear terms the wishes of the extreme Republican party.[1] *

[1] Louis Blanc, i. 319, 321; Cap. ii. 139, 144; Ann. Hist. 1830, 74, 79.

23. Continued indecision at the Hôtel de Ville.

But while these measures were adopted by the most violent of their partisans, M. de Lafayette was still a prey to anxiety and indecision, and he addressed a letter to M. de Mortemart, the courtesy and diplomatic ambiguity of which strangely contrasted with the precision and

* "France is free: it will have a constitution. It awards to the provisional government only the right of consulting it. In the mean time, until its will is expressed, the following principles must be recognised:—

"No more royalty.

"Government exercised solely by the representatives of the nation.

"The executive government confided to a temporary president.

"The concourse, mediate or immediate, of *all* the citizens in the election of deputies.

"The liberty of worship: no national religion.

"The forces by sea and land secured against arbitrary dismissal.

"The establishment of national guards over all France, and the preservation of the constitution intrusted to their arms.

"The principles for which we have shed our blood we are willing, if necessary, to support by legal insurrection."—LOUIS BLANC, vol. i. p. 322.

courage of the Republican Address. * Meanwhile, the alarm having spread among the Republicans, deputations rapidly succeeded each other at the Hôtel de Ville, whose vehemence and audacity differed widely from the irresolution of the chief. Among the rest there arrived one from the scholars of the Ecole Polytechnique, who had distinguished themselves so much during the insurrection; and at their instigation a proclamation was prepared, to be addressed to a regiment stationed at La Fère. M. Mauguin began to write it, when he was interrupted by M. Odillon Barrot, who said, "Let them do it; they understand it better than you." When the proclamation was written, it was presented to General Lobau to sign, but he refused. "He will sign nothing," said M. Mauguin; "he has just refused to sign an order for the seizure of a depot of powder." "He recoils, then!" exclaimed one of the deputation. "Nothing is so dangerous in revolution as those who recoil; I will have him shot." "Shot!" said M. Mauguin — "shoot a member of the provisional government!" "Sir," said the young man, leading him to the window, and pointing to a hundred men who had fought the preceding day at the Caserne de Babylone, "there are men who, if ordered by me to shoot God Almighty, would do it!" M. Mauguin signed the proclamation in silence.[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, i. 324; Sarrans, i. 124, 127.

While the scales of fortune thus hung equally poised at the Hôtel de Ville, the able men who directed the

* "I have received the letter which you did me the honour to send me, with all the sentiments which your personal character has long inspired. M. de Sussy will give you an account of the visit which he has paid to me. I have fulfilled your intention in reading what you addressed to me to the persons by whom I was surrounded. I asked M. de Sussy to withdraw to the Municipal Council, then thinly attended, which was sitting in the Hôtel de Ville. He has seen M. Lafitte, who was there with several of his colleagues, and I will give to General Gérard the papers which you have intrusted to me, but the duties which retain me here render it impossible for me to wait on you. If you come to the Hôtel de Ville, I will have the honour of receiving you, but without advantage as to the object of this conversation, since your communications have been made to my colleagues."—LAFAYETTE *to* M. DE MORTEMART; LOUIS BLANC, vol. i. p. 323.

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24. Easy defeat of the Napoleonists.

affairs of the Orléanists, at Lafitte's, were improving the time to the uttermost in furthering the interests of their chief. Two young men, MM. Ladvocat and Dumoulin, thought at first of proclaiming the Empire; but Thiers and Mignet persuaded the first to desist from the attempt, and the latter, having gone in uniform to the great hall in the Hôtel de Ville, was invited to walk for consultation into an adjoining apartment, where he was disarmed and made prisoner. The great name of Napoléon—that name which had so lately resounded through the world, and was still worshipped in secret by so many hearts—was scarcely heard in those eventful days, when the crown he had worn seemed offered as the prize of the first audacious enterprise. Singular revolution in the wheel of fortune, to have occurred in so short a time, and rendered still more remarkable by what took place in after days, on a similar scramble for the crown in the same city![1]

[1] Louis Blanc, i. 325, 326; Sarrans, i. 129, 132.

25. Panic of the Orléanists at Lafitte's.

But while so many circumstances conspired to facilitate the ascent of the throne by the Duke of Orléans, it was all but lost by his own timidity and irresolution. Anxiously expected at the Hôtel Lafitte, where the crown was to be tendered to him, he did not make his appearance. Hour after hour elapsed after that at which the deputies had promised his arrival, and still he was not visible. Anxiety first, then alarm, was painted on every visage. Had he declined the crown? Did he want courage to seize it? These questions were present to every mind, and as evening approached, and he still did not arrive, began to be cautiously whispered in Lafitte's crowded ante-chamber. Messengers were sent to the Palais Royal, to inquire if any tidings had been received of his royal highness. They returned with intelligence that nothing was known, that he had not been heard of, and that a few domestics, in evident alarm, alone occupied the sumptuous residence. It was soon whispered that they were removing the most valuable effects from the

Palais Royal, and that Béranger had been very ill received by the assembly at Lointier's. The word REPUBLIC was heard in the saloons of the great banker. Instantly a universal panic took place. Every one found some pretext for leaving the hotel. In a few minutes the rooms were empty; it was the counterpart of the desertion of Napoleon at Fontainebleau. By eleven o'clock no one remained with Lafitte but M. Adolphe Thibaudeau and M. Benjamin Constant. When they were about to separate, the Duke de Broglie entered, followed by M. Maurice Duval, but still they could give no intelligence of the Duke. "What will become of us to-morrow?" said Lafitte. "We shall be hanged," replied Benjamin Constant, with the look and accent of despair.[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, i. 332, 333.

26. Arrival of the Duke of Orléans at Paris, and his interview with M. de Mortemart.

This alternative, which at that juncture was more than probable, however, was prevented by what soon after occurred. At one in the morning, Col. Heymès came and announced the arrival of the Duke of Orléans at Paris. In effect, he had set out at eleven at night, on foot, from Neuilly, disguised in a bourgeois dress, accompanied only by three persons similarly equipped. Worn out with anxiety and fatigue, he passed the barrier a little after midnight, and traversed the streets, amidst the cries of the Republicans, to which he was obliged to respond in order to make his way through the throng. M. de Mortemart was introduced soon after his arrival. He found the Prince stretched on a mattress in one of the apartments, bathed in sweat, undressed, and covered only with an old coverlid. He began immediately to protest, with the utmost volubility, his strong attachment and unalienable fidelity to the elder branch of his family. While he was still doing so, cries of "Vive le Duc d'Orléans!" were heard in the streets. "You hear that?" said M. de Mortemart; "it is you that they design." "No, no," replied the Duke with energy; "*I would die rather than accept the crown!* Yesterday evening a crowd invaded Neuilly, and asked to see me in the name of the deputies. On

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being informed by the Duchess that I was abroad, they declared that they would take her to Paris with all her children, and keep them there prisoners till the Duke of Orléans made his appearance. The Duchess, terrified at her position, and trembling for her children, wrote me an urgent note to return as soon as possible. That letter was brought me by a faithful servant. Upon receiving it, I no longer hesitated to return to save my family, and they brought me here far on in the evening." And seizing a pen, he wrote a letter, full of protestations of fidelity, to Charles X., which M. de Mortemart enclosed in his neckcloth, and set off. It was that letter which inspired such cruel confidence in the falling monarch, and caused him to repose with fatal security on the fidelity of his insidious and vacillating kinsman. While this was passing at Paris, in the palace of the Duke of Orléans, Charles X., the Duchess de Berri, and the royal infants were on their way, at midnight, from St Cloud to Trianon, bathed in tears, and under the escort of a slender detachment of the body-guard.[1]

[1] Cap. ii. 164; Louis Blanc, i. 334, 335; Sarrans, i. 134, 137.

27. The Duke accepts the lieutenancy-general of the kingdom. July 31.

At eight on the following morning, M. Sébastiani, with a deputation, arrived at the Palais Royal. They entered the Duke's apartment, contrary to all custom, without being announced, and stated the object of their visit, which was to pray the Duke to accept the lieutenancy-general of the kingdom. The moment was solemn; a crown or a scaffold were the alternatives which were presented. A stronger mind than that of the Duke of Orléans might have quailed under the responsibility of decision under such circumstances; and his indecision was increased by the knowledge that Charles X., at the head of twelve thousand men, was only a few leagues from Paris, and by the efforts which the loyal spirit of the Duchess had made to retain him in the path of honour and duty. His embarrassment was visible on his countenance, scarcely disguised by a forced smile on his lips. For some time his indecision continued; he still strove to

await the course of events, and to gain time for them to declare themselves; the usual resource of feeble minds in presence of danger. Seeing him thus irresolute, and divining, perhaps, through all his studied evasions, the secret wishes of the Duke, the deputies assumed higher language, and pointed out the dangers which threatened the country and himself if a decision was any longer delayed. The Duke prayed for a few minutes longer, and retired to his cabinet, followed by General Sébastiani, who was immediately despatched to M. de Talleyrand's, in the Rue Saint Florentin. Sébastiani found the "putter down and setter up of kings" dressing, and soon returned with a sealed letter, in which were written the words "Qu'il accepte." The Duke hesitated no longer, but re-entered the large saloon, and announced his acceptance of the Lieutenance-Générale, which was immediately announced in a skilful proclamation to the inhabitants of the capital.[1]*

[1] Louis Blanc, i. 337, 338; Cap. ii. 181, 184; Sarrans, i. 90, 92.

28. M. Guizot's proclamation of the principles of the Government.

The address was received with loud acclamations by the Chamber; but it was felt to be indispensable to publish an exposition of the principles on which the government was to be conducted, and the form which it was to assume. The duty of framing it was intrusted to the skilful hands of M. Guizot, and it was signed by ninety-one deputies. In it are to be found the leading principles of constitutional government, indeed, but enveloped in generalities very different from the clearness and precision of the Republicans at the Hôtel de Ville, and on that account more likely to occasion heats and animosity

* "Inhabitants of Paris!—The Deputies of France, at this moment assembled at Paris, have expressed a wish that I should repair to that capital to exercise the functions of Lieutenant-General of the kingdom. I have not hesitated to share your danger, to place myself in the midst of that heroic population, and to make every effort to preserve you from civil war and anarchy. On entering the city of Paris, I bore with pride those glorious colours which you have resumed, and which I myself have long borne. The Chambers are about to assemble; they will consider the means of assuring the reign of the laws, and the maintenance of the rights of the nation. A charter shall henceforth be a reality.

LOUIS-PHILIPPE D'ORLÉANS."

—*Moniteur*, Aug. 1, 1830.

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in the capital.* Nothing was to be found in it of a lowering of the qualification of electors, of a republic, or of universal suffrage, but much of the development of institutions and progressive improvement, which they well knew in reality meant nothing. Accordingly, the address was extremely ill received at the Hôtel de Ville, and in all the crowded parts of the city; and one of the agents who was distributing it in the Rue Jean Jacques Rousseau, owed his life only to the intervention of an armed body of the Ecole Polytechnique. "Where was the Duke of Orléans when we were fighting in the streets? When did he enter Paris? On the 30th, when the victory was gained, and it remained only to bury the dead! A friend

* "Français, la France est libre. Le pouvoir absolu levait son drapeau. L'héroïque population de Paris l'a abattu. Paris attaqué a fait triompher, par les armes, la cause sacrée qui venait de triompher en vain dans les élections. Un pouvoir usurpateur de nos droits, perturbateur de notre repos, menaçait, à la fois, la liberté et l'ordre. Nous rentrons en possession de l'ordre et de la liberté. Plus de crainte pour les droits acquis, plus de barrière entre nous et les droits qui nous manquent encore!

"Un gouvernement qui, sans délai, nous garantisse ces biens, est aujourd'hui le premier besoin de la Patrie. Français! Ceux de vos députés qui se trouvent déjà à Paris, se sont réunis, et, en attendant l'intervention régulière des Chambres, ils ont invité un Français qui n'a jamais combattu que pour la France, M. le Duc d'Orléans, à exercer les fonctions de Lieutenant-Général du royaume. C'est à leurs yeux le moyen d'accomplir promptement, par la paix, le succès de la plus légitime des forces.

"Le Duc d'Orléans est dévoué à la cause nationale et constitutionelle. Il en a toujours défendu les intérêts et professé les principes. Il respectera nos droits; car il tiendra de nous les siens. Nous nous assurerons, par des lois, toutes les garanties nécessaires pour rendre la liberté forte et durable.

"Le rétablissement de la Garde Nationale, avec l'intervention des Gardes Nationaux dans le choix des officiers.

"L'intervention des citoyens dans la formation des administrations municipale et départementale.

"Le Jury pour les délits de la presse.

"La responsabilité légalement organisée des ministres, et des agents secondaires de l'administration.

"L'état des militaires légalement assuré.

"La réélection des députés promus à des fonctions publiques.

"Nous donnerons à nos institutions, de concert avec le chef de l'état, les développements dont elles ont besoin.

"Français! Le Duc d'Orléans lui-même a parlé, et son langage est celui qui convient à un pays libre. Les Chambres vont se réunir pour les détails. Elles aviseront aux moyens d'assurer le règne des lois et le maintien des droits de la nation. La charte sera désormais une vérité."—*Moniteur*, Aug. 1, 1830. *Ann. Hist.*, 1830, p. 174.

of the court, his place was beside the King—a supporter of the people, why was he not at our head in the Hôtel de Ville, in the Marché des Innocents, at the Porte St Denis, at the façade of the Louvre? What guarantee does his address or that of the Chambers hold out? None but a few vague phrases which in reality mean nothing, and are consistent with the most complete despotism that ever disgraced humanity." Words such as these were in every mouth among the working classes of the citizens, and it was evident to all that, if a government was not immediately established, the chances were that a republic could no longer be averted.[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, i. 341, 344; Cap. ii. 180, 182; Ann. Hist. 1830, 128, 130.

29. Visit of the Duke of Orléans to the Hôtel de Ville.

These considerations led the Orléanists to accelerate the visit of the Prince to the Hôtel de Ville, where he would meet his most formidable antagonists face to face, and an end might be put to the state of uncertainty which prevailed concerning the government. Already they had been preparing for his reception there; night and day Lafayette was besieged with representations from the Duke's partisans, that the recognition of him as sovereign was the only possible way of avoiding the dangers which threatened the country. He was still a prey to indecision, when it was announced that the Duke of Orléans, with such of the Chamber as had signed the address to him, were coming to visit him in the Hôtel de Ville. The deputies, in coming to the Palais Royal, had been so ill received by the crowds which filled the streets that they trembled for their lives. The procession set out amidst loud acclamations, however, from the Palais Royal;—the Duke on horseback; M. Lafitte, who had been hurt on the leg, carried by Savoyards in a litter. The acclamations continued as they passed the Carrousel, but they sensibly lessened as they went along the quays; and when they approached the Place de Grève, appearances were quite threatening. An immense crowd filled the square, the grave and menacing aspect of which augured ill to the new reign which was about to com-

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mence. Everything was prepared to give him a hostile reception by the Republicans who crowded the Place, and assassins were even prepared with loaded fire-arms to kill him on the spot. Hardly were Benjamin Constant and Béranger able to restrain them. Nor were these sentiments shared only by the humbler classes. "He is a Bourbon!" cried General Lobau; "I am not for him more than the rest." The crowd was anxious and agitated, and the swell and fall were visible among them which betoken an approaching storm.[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, i. 347, 348; Cap. ii. 183, 184; Ann. Hist. 1831, 76, 77.

30. His reception there.

At length the Duke approached, grave and anxious, but without any visible perturbation. When he alighted from his horse and ascended the steps of the Hôtel de Ville, a loud rolling of drums was heard in the interior of the building, and Lafayette came to the top of the stair to receive him. The Duke of Orléans was deadly pale. Lafayette advanced to him with the studied politeness of the old school. The ceremony commenced with the reading the declaration of the Chambers. When they came to the words, "Jury trial for the offences of the press," the Duke leant forward to Lafitte and said, loud enough to be overheard, "There will be no longer any offences of the press." When the reading was finished, the Duke rose up, and said with a loud voice, "As a Frenchman, I deplore the evils inflicted on the country; as a prince, I am happy to contribute to the happiness of the nation." The deputies loudly applauded these words; the Republicans gnashed their teeth with indignation. General Dubourg then advanced, and, pointing to the square filled with armed men, said, "You know our rights; should you forget them, we will remind you of them." General Lafayette then led the Prince out on the balcony of the window, and as the tricolor flag waved over their heads, embraced the Prince in the presence of the people. Loud applause followed the dramatic scene. "Vive Lafayette! Vive le Duc d'Orléans!" was heard on all sides.[2] "The

[2] Ann. Hist. 1830, 78, 86; Louis Blanc, i. 349, 350; Sarrans, i. 87, 92; Cap. ii. 187, 189.

part of the people," says the Republican historian, "was played out; the reign of the bourgeois commenced."

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After the Duke had retired, a programme was written out, which contained, as it were, the "social contract" between the king and people. It was then the famous expression was used, "What France requires *is a throne surrounded with republican institutions.*" M. Lafayette brought it to the Palais Royal for the Duke's signature, but, with the trust of a man of honour, he was satisfied with the Duke's words, and did not require his signature. Lafayette was afterwards warmly reproached for his negligence on this occasion; but he partook the illusion, at that period common among all the philosophic Liberals, as to the possibility of uniting the reality of a republic with the forms of a monarchy. "Good God! is it then true," said the old Abbé Grégoire, "we are thus to have both a Republic and a King!"[1]

31. Reflections on this interview.

[1] Louis Blanc, i. 353, 354.

The Government of the Bourgeoisie was now constituted; but there remained the difficult task of reconciling the people to any government in which a Bourbon bore a part. To obviate the unfavourable impression thus produced, the Orléans committee prepared and placarded over all Paris a proclamation—not a little surprising, considering that M. Mignet and M. Thiers were members of it.—"*Le Duc d'Orléans n'est pas un Bourbon; c'est un Valois.*" A memorable assertion to be made by historians of a lineal descendant of Henry IV., and of the brother of Louis XIV.! At the same time, the utmost pains were taken to discredit the Republicans in every possible way, and represent their ascendancy as the immediate precursor of pillage, violence, and a second reign of blood. These efforts were eminently successful; the recollection of the former revolution was too recent not to speak powerfully to every rational mind. M. Thiers, M. Guizot, M. Mignet, and the other able writers who at that period directed the liberal press, did their

32. Efforts of the Orléanists to popularise the new dynasty.

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utmost to encourage these views, and as they coincided with the ideas of the great majority of the citizens, and of nearly all possessed of property, the Republicans were soon reduced to a small fraction of society, guided, however, by the most ardent and intrepid men. To win over these leaders was the great object, and to bring it about, a meeting was arranged between them and the Duke of Orléans.[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, i. 355, 356; Cap. ii. 88, 92.

33. Conversation between the Duke of Orléans and the Republicans.

"To-morrow," said M. Boinvilliers, the spokesman on the occasion—"to-morrow you will be King." At these words the Duke shook his head and said, "I have never aspired to the crown, though many persons have pressed me with ardour to accept it." "But," resumed M. Boinvilliers, "if you should become King, what are your ideas upon the treaties of 1815? Observe, it is not a *liberal* revolution, it is a *national* one, which has taken place in the streets. It is the sight of the tricolor flag which has raised the people, and it would be more easy to drive Paris to the Rhine than St Cloud." "I am no partisan of the treaties of 1815, but we must avoid irritating foreign powers." "What is your opinion on the peerage? It has no longer any roots in society; the new law, by dividing properties, has stifled it in its cradle, and the aristocracy has lived out its day." "In hereditary aristocracy," replied the Duke, "is the best basis of society; but it is an open question; and if the hereditary peerage cannot maintain itself, I am not the man who will endow it. I was once a Republican, but I have lived to be convinced it is inapplicable to such a country as France." "In the interest of the crown," interrupted M. Bastide, "you should convoke the primary assemblies." To this the Duke made no other answer, but pointed to paintings of the battles of Valmy and Jemappes, at which he had assisted. He then condemned in violent terms the proceedings of the Convention." "You forget," said Cavaignac, "that my father was a member of the Convention." "And mine also!" cried the Duke; "and I never knew a

more respectable man." Finding they could make nothing of him, the Republicans retired. "You will return to-morrow?" said the Duke, in a flattering voice. "Never," replied one of their number. "Never!—that is a word which should never be uttered," said the Duke; and they parted. "He is nothing but one of the two hundred and twenty-one," said M. Bastide, as they regained the street.[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, i. 359, 360.

34. Noble speech of Chateaubriand.

While the Chamber of Deputies was thus substantially disposing of the crown, by conferring on the Duke of Orléans the Lieutenancy-General of the kingdom, the Chamber of Peers was also assembled; and the last days of the monarchy were illustrated by one of those dignified scenes, that heroic sentiment, which, like the last rays of the sun, sometimes illuminate, ere it sets in darkness, the declining day. "A king," said Chateaubriand, "named by the Chambers or elected by the people, will ever be, whatever pains may be taken to disguise it, a novelty in France. I suppose that they wish liberty—above all, the liberty of the press, by which, and for which, they have gained so astonishing a victory. Well, every *new* monarchy, sooner or later, will be obliged to gag that liberty. Was Napoleon himself able to admit it? Daughter of our misfortunes and slave of our glory, the liberty of the press cannot live in safety but under a government which has struck its roots deep into the hearts of men. Will a monarchy, the bastard child of a bloody night, have nothing to fear from the independence of opinion? If one party preaches up a republic, the other a more modified system, will you not be speedily driven to have recourse to laws of exception, against which no charter can afford any guarantee? What, then, friends of regulated liberty, will you gain by the change which is proposed? Of necessity you will fall into a republic, or a system of legal servitude. The monarchy will be inundated and carried away by the torrent of democratic laws, or the monarch by the movement of faction. In the first moment of success,

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you imagine that all is easy—that you can satisfy all exigencies, all humours—that every one will put aside his separate interests for the general good—that the superiority of intelligence, and the wisdom of government, will surmount all difficulties; but before a few months have elapsed, experience will demonstrate the futility of such expectations.

35. Continued.

"A republic is still more impracticable. In the existing state of our morals, and in our relations with the adjoining states, such a government is out of the question. The first difficulty would be to bring the French to any unanimous opinion on the subject. What right has the people of Paris to impose a government by its vote on the people of Marseilles? What right have they to constrain any other town to receive the rulers whom they have chosen, or the form of government which they have adopted? Shall we have one republic or twenty republics?—a federal union, or a commonwealth, one and indivisible? Do you really suppose that, with your manners and ideas, any president, let him be as grave or authoritative as can be figured, will be able, for any length of time, to maintain his authority, except by force? Must he not soon be reduced to the necessity of making himself a despot or resigning? He will neither inspire the confidence which is necessary to the security and the prosperity of commerce, nor possess the power requisite for the maintenance of domestic tranquillity, nor the dignity essential in intercourse with foreign states. If he has recourse to coercive measures, the republic will become odious at home; if he gives it full license abroad, it will become the object of terror, and bring Europe to our gates. A representative republic may perhaps be the destined future of the world, but its time has not yet arrived.

36. Continued.

"Iniquitous ministers have sullied the Crown: they have supported the violation of the law by murder; they have made a laughing-stock of oaths, and of all that is

sacred upon earth. Strangers! you who have twice entered Paris, learn the secret of your success. You presented yourselves in the name of legal power. If you now hastened to the support of illegal usurpation, do you suppose that the gates of the capital of the civilised world would so speedily be opened to you? The French nation has grown major since the departure of your armies, under the reign of constitutional laws: our children of fourteen are giants to what they were; our conscripts of Algiers, our scholars of Paris, have revealed to us the sons of the conquerors of Marengo, Austerlitz, and Jena, but the sons fortified by all that liberty adds to glory. Never was cause more sacred than that of the people of Paris. They have risen, not against the law, but for the law. So long as their rights were respected, they remained quiet; neither insults, provocations, menaces, nor bribes, have been able to shake their loyalty. But when, after having kept up the system of deceit to the last moment, the signal of slavery was suddenly sounded, they became prodigal of their blood. When a terror of the palaces, organised by eunuchs, pretended to replace the terror of the Republic founded in blood, or the terror of the Empire radiant with glory, then the people stood forth armed with their intelligence and their courage; then they showed that the shopkeepers were not afraid of the smell of powder, and that it required more than a corporal and a few soldiers to subdue them. A great crime has been committed; it has produced a mighty explosion: but what we have now to consider is, whether we are constrained by this crime and its moral expiation to violate the established order of things.

37. Continued.

"Charles X. and his son are dethroned, or have abdicated, as you have heard; but the throne is not thereby vacant. After them a child is called to the succession, and who will venture to condemn his innocence? What blood cries for justice? No one ventures to say *his*

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father has shed it. Alas! it was shed by an assassin, in the name, though against the wishes, of the people. The orphan he has left, educated in the schools of the country, in the ideas of the constitution, and abreast of his age, might become a king with all the requirements of the future. It is to the guardian of his youth that you may commit the oath by which he is to reign: arrived at majority, he will renew that oath in his own person. That combination removes every obstacle, reconciles every advantage, and perhaps may save France from the convulsions which attend too frequently violent changes in the state. I know that in removing that child it is said you establish the principle of the sovereignty of the people: the new sovereign or president can hold only of the people. Vain illusion, the offspring of the old school, which proves that in the march of intellect our old democrats have not made greater advances than the partisans of royalty. Absolute government is nowhere to be found: liberty does not flow from political right, as was supposed in the eighteenth century; it flows from natural right, which is the same under all forms of government. It were easy to show that men may be as free, and freer, under a monarchy than a republic, were this the time or the place to deliver a lecture on political philosophy.

38. Continued.

"All Europe has for ages recognised the superiority of a hereditary to an elective monarchy. The reason is obvious; it stands in need of no development. You choose a king to-day; who is to prevent you from choosing another to-morrow? The law will do so. You have made the law; you can unmake it. You have conquered and dethroned the Bourbons, and you will maintain what you have gained. It is well. You proclaim the sovereignty of force: be sure you keep it well; for if in a few months it escapes you, you will have no title to complain of your own overthrow. At the moment when the abominable abuse of power has broken the sceptre in the hand of him who wielded it, are you prepared to seize the

fragments and do the same with them? Dangerous fragments! they will wound the arm which has seized them even before those against whom they are directed. The idolatry of a name is ended. Monarchy is no longer a worship; it is a simple form of government, preferable at this crisis to any other, because it can alone reconcile order with liberty.

39. Concluded.

"A disregarded Cassandra, I have fatigued the throne and the peerage enough with my prophecies; it remains for me only to seat myself on the ruins of a shipwreck which I have so often predicted. I recognise in misfortune every power except that of liberating us from our oaths of fidelity. I am bound to render my life consistent. After all I have said, done, and written for the Bourbons, I should be the basest of the human race if I denied them when, for the *third and last time,* they are directing their steps towards exile. I leave fear to those generous Royalists who have never sacrificed a penny or a place to their fidelity, who formerly reproached me with being a renegade, an apostate, a revolutionist. Instigators of the *coup d'etat,* where are you now? The noble colours which decorated your bosoms could not conceal their baseness. In speaking thus openly, I am not doing an act of heroism; these are not the times when an opinion costs a life; if it were so, I should speak a hundred times more openly. We have no reason to fear a people whose moderation is equal to their courage, or that generous youth whom I admire, and for whom, as for my country, I wish honour, liberty, and glory. Far be it from me to wish to sow divisions in my country; it is for that that I have stilled in my speech the voice of the passions. If I had the right to dispose of the crown, I would willingly place it at the feet of the Duke of Orléans; but I see vacant only a tomb at St Denis, and not a throne.[1] Whatever may be the destinies of the Lieutenant-General of the kingdom, I shall never be his enemy, if he contributes to the happiness of the country;

[1] Moniteur, Aug. 3, 1830; Ann. Hist. 1830, 240, 242.

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40. Chateaubriand refuses the portfolio of foreign affairs.

for myself I ask only liberty of conscience, and the right to die where I shall find independence and repose."

This noble conduct was too elevated for the French peers of the nineteenth century, or perhaps for any but a few lofty minds in any age. A few peers adhered to M. de Chateaubriand, but the great majority went with the tide, and the Chamber, by a majority of 89 to 10, voted the address to the Duke of Orléans to accept the throne. All had not the magnanimity of that chivalrous relic of the olden time, and his disinterestedness will not be duly appreciated unless it is known what, at the very moment when he made this declaration, he had been refusing. The Duke of Orléans, who was extremely apprehensive of the effect likely to be produced by the indignant speech of the poetic orator, had recently before sent for him, and offered him the situation of minister of foreign affairs if he would send in his adhesion to his government. The request was supported by the tears of the Duchess of Orléans and the masculine eloquence of Madame Adélaide—but in vain. Chateaubriand resisted alike their offers and their solicitations: he preferred rather poverty, exile, and honour. He resigned all his situations under Government, sold off his whole effects, and withdrew from France with 700 francs (£28), the sole residue of all his fortune.* "*Semper bonæ mentis soror est paupertas.*"[1]

[1] Chateaub. Mem. d'Outre Tombe, ix. 390, 393, 351, 355; Ann. Hist. xiii. 243, 245; Louis Blanc, i. 438.

At length this well-got-up dramatic scene, on the part

* Chateaubriand has left, in his *Mémoires d'Outre Tombe*, an extremely interesting account of his conversation with the Duchess of Orléans, the Princess Adélaide, and Louis Philippe, on this decisive occasion: "Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans me fit asseoir auprès d'elle, et sur-le-champ elle me dit, —'Ah! Monsieur de Chateaubriand, nous sommes bien malheureux. Si tous les partis voulaient se réunir, peut-être pourrait-on encore se sauver. Que pensez-vous de tout cela?' 'Madame,' répondis-je, 'rien n'est si aisé. Charles X. et Monsieur le Dauphin ont abdiqué. Henri est maintenant roi. Monseigneur le Duc d'Orléans est Lieutenant-Général du royaume. Qu'il soit régent pendant la minorité de Henri V., et tout est fini.' 'Mais, M. de Chateaubriand, le peuple est très-agité; nous tomberons dans l'anarchie.' 'Madame, oserai-je vous demander quelle est l'intention de M. le Duc de Orléans? Acceptera-t-il la couronne si on la lui offre?' Les deux princesses hésitèrent à répondre; Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans répartit après un moment

41. Acceptance of the crown by Louis Philippe. Aug. 7.

of the Duke of Orléans, drew to a close. The Republicans made immense efforts for some days, after the display at the Hôtel de Ville on the 31st August, to get up a democratic agitation, and bands of young men, with whom the police and military did not venture to interfere, paraded the streets, incessantly calling on the people to assert their rights, and not suffer the crown to be disposed of by a clique at Lafitte's, without their knowledge or

de silence,—'Songez, M. de Chateaubriand, aux malheurs qui peuvent arriver. Il faut que tous les honnêtes gens s'entendent pour nous sauver de la République. A Rome, M. de Chateaubriand, vous pourriez rendre de si grands services, ou même ici, si vous ne voulez plus quitter la France.' 'Madame n'ignore pas mon dévouement au jeune roi, et à sa mère?' 'Ah! M. de Chateaubriand, ils vous ont si bien traité.' 'Votre Altesse Royale ne voudrait pas que je démentisse toute ma vie.' 'Monsieur de Chateaubriand, vous ne connaissez pas ma nièce. Elle est si légère—Pauvre Caroline! Je vais envoyer chercher M. le Duc d'Orléans, il vous persuadera mieux que moi.' La princesse donna des ordres, et Louis Philippe arriva au bout d'un demi-quart d'heure. Il était mal vêtu, et avait l'air extrêmement fatigué. . . . . 'Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans a dû vous dire combien nous sommes malheureux.' Et sur-le-champ il fit une idylle sur le bonheur dont il jouissait à la campagne, sur la vie tranquille et selon ses goûts qu'il passait au milieu de ses enfants. Je saisis le moment d'une pose entre deux strophes pour prendre à mon tour respectueusement la parole, et pour répéter à peu près ce que j'avais dit aux princesses. 'Ah!' s'écria-t-il, 'c'était-là mon désir! Combien je serais satisfait d'être le tuteur et le soutien de cet enfant! Je pense tout comme vous, M. de Chateaubriand; prendre le Duc de Bordeaux serait certainement ce qu'il y aurait de mieux à faire. Je crains seulement que les évènements ne soient plus forts que nous.' 'Plus forts que nous, Monseigneur! N'êtes-vous pas estimé de tous les pouvoirs? Allons rejoindre Henri V. Appelez auprès de vous hors de Paris les Chambres et l'armée. Sur le seul bruit de votre départ, toute cette effervescence tombera, et l'on cherchera un abri sous votre pouvoir éclairé et protecteur.' Pendant que je parlais, j'observais Louis Philippe. *Mon conseil le mettait mal à l'aise. Je lus écrit sur son front le désir d'être roi.* 'Monsieur de Chateaubriand,' me dit-il *sans me regarder*, 'la chose est plus difficile que vous ne le pensez; cela ne va pas comme cela. Vous ne savez pas dans quel péril nous sommes. Une bande furieuse peut se porter contre les Chambres aux derniers excès, et nous n'avons rien encore pour nous défendre. . . . . Croyez-le bien c'est moi qui retiens seul une foule menaçante. Si le parti royaliste n'est pas massacré, il ne doit sa vie qu'à mes efforts.' 'Monseigneur,' répondis-je, 'j'ai vu des massacres; ceux qui ont passé à travers la Révolution sont aguerris. Les moustaches grises ne se laissent pas effrayer par les objets qui font peur aux conscrits.' . . . . Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans désira me voir encore une fois. . . . . 'Je supplie madame,' dis-je, 'd'excuser la vivacité de mes paroles. Je suis pénétré de ses bontés; j'en garderai un profond et reconnaissant souvenir, mais elle ne voudrait pas me déshonorer. Plaignez-moi, madame, plaignez-moi!' Elle se leva, et, en s'en allant, elle me dit, '*Je ne vous plains pas, Monsieur de Chateaubriand, je ne vous plains pas.*'"—CHATEAUBRIAND, *Mémoires d'Outre Tombe*, vol. ix. pp. 352, 362.

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consent. The club at Lointier's even went so far as to prepare and placard a proclamation, in which they refused to recognise the Lieutenancy-General of the Duke of Orléans, and insisted that the provisional government, with Lafayette at its head, should remain in possession of power at the Hôtel de Ville till the sense of the nation had been taken upon the form of government to which it was inclined. But it was all in vain. Leaders, organisation, money, were all awanting on their side, as much as they were in affluence in the ante-chambers of Louis Philippe; and these in the long run, and after the first burst of popular enthusiasm is over, are all-powerful in civil as well as in all other conflicts. From the 1st to the 6th August, the Chambers were occupied with the preparation of the constitution; and on the 9th, a deputation from the two Chambers waited on the Duke of Orléans with the constitution which had been agreed upon, and made him a formal offer of the throne, which he at once accepted.[1]

[1] Moniteur, Aug. 10. 1830; Ann. Hist. xiii. 245; Louis Blanc, i. 429, 431; Sarrans, i. 34, 35.

42. Speeches on the occasion of his accepting the constitution. Aug. 9.

The ceremony of accepting the constitution took place with great pomp in the Chamber of Deputies. "Gentlemen, Peers and Deputies," said the Duke, after the reading of the constitution had terminated, "I have read with great attention the declaration of the Chamber of Deputies and the adhesion of the Peers, and I have weighed and meditated upon all its expressions. I accept, without restriction or reserve, the clauses and engagements which that declaration contains, and the title of KING OF THE FRENCH which it confers upon me, and I am ready to swear to observe them." He then took the oath, which was in these terms: "In the presence of God, I swear to observe faithfully the constitutional charter, with the modifications contained in the declaration; to govern only by the laws, and according to the laws; to render fair and equal justice to every one, according to his right, and to act in everything in no other view but that of the interest, the happiness, and the glory

of the French people." He then ascended the throne amidst cries of "Vive le Roi! Vive Philippe VII.!" but he finally took the title of LOUIS PHILIPPE, and the cortège returned in the same pomp with the new King to the Palais Royal. Thus was the Revolution of 1830 consummated, and thus did a small minority, not exceeding a third of either Chamber, at the dictation of a clique in the ante-chambers of the Duke of Orléans, dispose of the crown to a stranger to the legitimate line, without either consulting the nation, or knowing what form of government it desired! In revolutions, as in all other matters, the many are in reality governed by the few, on one side or another; and victory remains with those few who can most skilfully arrange the passions and efforts of the many in support of their separate interests.[1]

[1] Moniteur, Aug. 10, 1830; Ann. Hist. xiii. 246, 248; Cap. ii. 355, 360.

43. Changes in the constitution of the Revolution.

Considering the extreme violence with which, by a well-concerted urban tumult, the throne of the elder branch of the house of Bourbon had been overturned, the changes made in the constitution were by no means so considerable as might have been expected, and they went far to vindicate Louis Philippe's assertion, that his acceptance of the crown was a conservative act in the interest of order in every European state. The leading articles of the charter of Louis XVIII. were agreed to, with the exception of the famous 14th clause, conferring a dictatorial power in certain extreme cases on the King, which had been founded on by Charles X. as the authority for the ordinances of Polignac, and the *coup d'état* which accompanied them. The age of electors was fixed at twenty-five, that of deputies at thirty-one. The creations of peers made during the reign of Charles X. were all declared null; but the important question of the hereditary character of the peerage was reserved for future discussion. The duration of the Chamber of Deputies was fixed at five years, and the annual removal and renewal of a fifth abolished. No change was, in the mean time, made in the money qualification of voters,

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which remained at 300 francs, or £12 of direct taxes; so little were even the victorious revolutionists aware of the vital importance of any regulation on that subject. They contented themselves with declarations on the responsibility of ministers; the trial of charges for alleged crimes of the press by juries; the re-election of deputies who had accepted office; the annual vote of the expenses of the army; the establishment of a National Guard; the pay of officers by sea or land; the municipal and departmental institutions; the public education and the liberty of instruction. These were all-important objects in the formation of the *details* of a free constitution; but even taken together, they yielded in importance to the vital point of the qualification of electors, a change in which, two years afterwards, changed the destinies of the British people.[1]

[1] Moniteur, Aug. 4 and 5, 1830; Ann. Hist. 1830, 224, 227; Louis Blanc, i. 433, 435.

44. Peers who resigned, and ministers who were appointed.

A few peers of the Royalist party, who preferred poverty to dishonour, gave in the resignation of their seats in the House of Peers. Their disinterestedness in doing so will not be duly appreciated, unless it is recollected that many of them, like Chateaubriand, had no other means of existence but the pension allotted to peers, which was 10,000 francs, or £400 a-year. The names were—the Duke de Montmorency, the Vicomte Dambray, the Marquis Latour-Maubourg, Latour-Dupin, the Dukes d'Avray and de Croï, the Vicomte de Chateaubriand, the Marquis de Pérignon, the Duke de Damas-Caux, Auguste de Talleyrand, and the Marquis de Saint-Romans. History may well preserve their names; her pages will not be overcharged with similar lists of disinterested fidelity. Some honourable Royalists, as the Duke de Noailles, M. de Mortemart, and M. de Martignac, took the oaths without reservation, as the only means, in existing circumstances, of saving the country; a few, as M. de Fitzjames, with the addition of a few unmeaning words of qualification. On the other hand, there was not awanting a phalanx of rising talent, partly aristo-

cratic, partly plebeian, which clustered round the throne of Louis Philippe. It was chiefly found among the editors or contributors to newspapers, who had been so instrumental in contributing to his elevation. By an ordinance of 11th August, M. Dupont de l'Eure was made Keeper of the Seals and Minister of Justice; Count Gérard, Secretary at War; Count Molé, Secretary for Foreign Affairs; Count Sébastiani for the Marine; the Duke de Broglie for Public Instruction, and President of the Council (Premier); Baron Louis, Secretary for the Finances; M. Guizot, Secretary for the Interior; M. Lafitte, M. Casimir Périer, M. Dupin aîné, and Baron Bignon, were ministers without any fixed appointments. This list was a great change upon the aristocratic cabinet of Charles X., but still it was not nearly so popular as the democratic retainers of the Duke of Orléans desired; and thence the commencement of a feeling of jealousy fraught with numberless difficulties to the government of Louis Philippe, and which in the end proved fatal to his throne.[1]

Aug. 11.

[1] Cap. ii. 405, 406, 418; Moniteur, Aug. 12, 1830.

45. Grievous distress in Paris.

But while everything at Paris, so far as the Government was concerned, was proceeding smoothly, distress, the invariable attendant on social convulsions, was spreading rapidly among the people; and the working classes were taught by bitter experience the eternal truth, that whoever gains by revolutions, they, in the first instance at least, are sure to lose. Before the songs of triumph were silent, or the discharges of musketry had ceased in the streets, a frightful amount of distress had spread among the people. In vain the Government placarded a proclamation through the capital: "Brave workmen! return to your workshops." They did so; but they found no work there. As a natural consequence of successful revolution, capital disappeared, and capitalists, the most timid of created beings, concealed instead of bringing forth their wealth. The consequences were disastrous in the extreme. "All the connections of industry," says the

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Republican annalist, "were interrupted; every musket-shot during the three days produced a bankruptcy. The Bank of France, though instituted expressly to ward off great crises, diminished its discounts with a cruel prudence, and sentinels watched over the doors of its treasures in a city filled with poor. Every day added to the distress of the people, attested by innumerable facts. The greatest of the printing offices in the capital employed, when the Revolution broke out, two hundred workmen, who earned each from four to six francs a-day; after the Revolution the premises were entirely closed during eight or ten days, at the end of which only ten or twelve workmen were re-employed. Even after the lapse of six months, not more than twenty or twenty-five were employed by any office, and they earned, not five francs a-day, but twenty-five or thirty sous. Yet was the trade of printing less depressed than others. This may give an idea of the immensity of the disasters which were universally experienced. To give one example among many others which might be cited: In the quarter of Gravilliers, a lodging-house, let to two hundred workmen for 17,000 francs, suddenly fell to 10,000, and ten years afterwards it had only risen to 14,000 francs." When such were the reality of the evils which the working classes endured, it was little consolation to them to be told they were the most brave and heroic of men, and that their praises were celebrated in a new *Marseillaise*, which was sung at all the theatres.[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, i. 445, 446.

46. Reception of the Revolution at Lyons, Bordeaux, and in the provinces.

So completely, by the results of the first Revolution, had the yoke of Paris been affixed round the neck of all France, that, after the capital had fairly declared itself, all resistance ceased in the provinces. But before the Revolution was known, or the telegraph had announced to the obedient departments who was to be their master, very serious disturbances took place, and the great manufacturing towns exhibited on a smaller scale the conflicts in the streets of Paris. The explosion was electrical and

unanimous in all the great towns of France, and, as in the capital, it was mainly determined by the defection of the military. Lyons, in particular, was immediately convulsed upon the receipt of the intelligence from Paris of the publication of the ordonnances. The news arrived there on the 29th July, and instantly all business was suspended, groups were formed in the streets, and crowds assembled, in which resistance, or at least protestation, was openly discussed. No sooner, however, did intelligence arrive of the fighting in the streets of Paris, than an insurrection began under the command of Lieut. Zindel and M. Prévost. Barricades began to be thrown up, and the National Guard turned out; but bloodshed was prevented by the defection of the military, who withdrew to their barracks amidst cries of "*Vive la charte! Vive la liberté! A bas les Bourbons!*" The news from Paris speedily completed the victory of the insurgents, and Lyons received the Government of Louis Philippe without having fired a shot. It was the same at Bordeaux, Rouen, and Marseilles; and although the western departments were longer in giving in their adhesion, yet ere long they too became convinced that farther resistance was hopeless; and before a fortnight was over the dynasty everywhere was changed, and all France had acknowledged the sceptre of Louis Philippe.[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, i. 422, 425; Cap. ii. 372, 379; Ann. Hist. 1830, 258, 264.

47. Recognition of Louis Philippe by the English Government.

But although all France had thus confirmed the Parisian change of dynasty, yet it was still a different matter how far Europe would acquiesce in it, and for a considerable time it was more than doubtful whether it would not rekindle the flames of general war. In England, indeed, it could not be doubted how the change would be received. The child of revolution, her Government could not disclaim revolution; passionately enamoured of liberty, her people could never regard with indifference a people who had drawn the sword in defence of freedom. This had uniformly been her policy: she had never intervened in any instance to put down

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free institutions in any country in the world; happy would it have been for her if she had never intervened on the other side, to lend her countenance and aid to the cause of revolution. The Duke of Wellington had very recently, in the case of Portugal, given proof at once of his determination to shield the allies of England from external aggression, and to abstain from any interference with their internal dissensions. The very first step of Louis Philippe, accordingly, was to despatch General Baudrand on a special mission to the Court of London, in order to obtain a recognition of his crown by the King of Great Britain. He made the journey in two days, and was enthusiastically received in passing along the road to London. In a private audience of the Duke of Wellington, he was assured by that statesman, "that England had had no share in the administration of Prince Polignac; that the throne of Charles X. had fallen from his own acts; that Great Britain, without waiting the answers of the powers with whom England was allied by the treaties of 1815, would at once recognise the King of the French, and would, if necessary, explain the events of Paris to the other powers of Europe, to whom they might be an object of suspicion and alarm." A few days afterwards, General Baudrand was formally admitted as the envoy of the King of the French by William IV., from whom he received the most gracious reception.[1]

[1] Cap. ii. 459, 461; Ann. Reg. 1830, 128, 129.

48 Manner in which he is received by the Continental sovereigns.

But although Louis Philippe was thus early and formally recognised by the nearest neighbour and most powerful ally or enemy of France, yet a more doubtful and difficult task remained to procure a similar recognition from the Continental sovereigns. The great point was, to obtain a recognition from the Emperor of Russia, as there could be little doubt that, if that was once obtained, the cabinets of Vienna and Berlin would soon follow the example of that set by the court of St Petersburg. The King of the French, accordingly, early despatched a

long and very able letter to the Emperor Nicholas, which is a valuable historical document, as containing the most authentic and best statement of the reasons which induced him to accept the crown.* General Athalin was despatched to St Petersburg with it; but before he arrived the way had been prepared by the secret despatches of Pozzo di Borgo from Paris, who gave the most favourable account of the conservative disposition and determined acts of Louis Philippe—the last barrier against the flood of democracy which threatened to deluge Europe. The French envoy accordingly met with a cordial reception at St Petersburg; and though the Emperor avoided any express recognition of the revolutionary principle of the right of the people to change their governors, yet he accepted Louis Philippe as a necessary compromise, and the best thing which, under existing circumstances, could be admitted. His autograph letter left no room for doubt that, as long as the French monarch persevered in a conservative course, he would meet with the support of the Continental sovereigns.[1]† CHAP. XXIV. 1830. [1] Cap. ii. 469, 471.

* "Monsieur mon Frère,—J'annonce mon avènement à la couronne à votre Majesté Impériale, par la lettre que le Général Athalin lui apportera en mon nom; mais, j'ai besoin de lui parler avec une entière confiance sur les suites d'une catastrophe que j'aurais tant voulu prévenir. Il y a longtemps que je regrettais que le roi Charles X. et son gouvernement ne suivissent pas une marche mieux faite pour répondre à l'attente et au vœu de la nation. J'étais bien loin pourtant de prévenir les suites prodigieuses des évènemens qui viennent de se passer; et je croyais même qu'à défaut de cette allure franche et loyale dans l'esprit de la charte et de nos institutions, qu'il était impossible d'obtenir, il aurait suffi d'un peu de prudence et de modération pour que le gouvernement pût aller longtemps comme il allait. Mais depuis le 8 Août 1829, la nouvelle composition du ministère m'avait fort alarmé. . . . . C'est dans cette situation, sire, que tous les yeux se sont tournés vers moi; les vainqueurs eux-mêmes m'ont cru nécessaire à leur salut. Je l'étais plus, peut-être, pour que les vainqueurs ne laissassent pas dégénérer la victoire. J'ai donc accepté cette tâche noble et pénible, et j'ai écarté toutes les considérations personnelles qui se réunissent pour me faire désirer d'en être dispensé, parceque j'ai senti que la moindre hésitation de ma part pourrait compromettre l'avenir de la France, et le repos de tous nos voisins."—LOUIS PHILIPPE *à l'Empereur* NICHOLAS, Aug. 10, 1830; CAPEFIGUE, vol. ii. pp. 456, 457.

† "J'ai reçu, des mains du Général Athalin, la lettre dont il a été porteur. Des évènemens à jamais déplorables ont placé votre Majesté dans une cruelle alternative. Elle a pris une détermination qui lui a paru la seule propre à sauver la France des plus grandes calamités, et je ne prononcerai pas sur les

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49. His recognition by the cabinet of Vienna.

Ere this decisive recognition had taken place at the court of St Petersburg, General Belliard, who was despatched to Vienna, had met with a more amicable reception than could have been anticipated from the Austrian cabinet. Prince Metternich, who ruled it, was as well aware as any man of the necessity of bending to circumstances, and not insisting for the full carrying out of a principle when a compromise had become alone practicable. He received the French envoy, accordingly, with these words: "The Emperor Francis II., so honourable a man, has already manifested his supreme disdain for the breach of faith on the part of Charles X., and he is prepared to recognise the new Government which France has adopted. What sympathy can Austria feel for that elder branch, which has thrice compromised the peace of Europe by its faults and follies? All that she desires of France is respect for existing treaties, the maintenance of engagements, and especially the suppression of that strange spirit of propagandism which the revolutionary faction may spread over Europe by the hands of M. de Lafayette."[1]

[1] Cap. ii. 463, 464.

50. And by Prussia.

It was sufficiently plain, from this ready recognition at the court of Vienna, which exceeded the most sanguine hopes of the partisans of Louis Philippe, that its cabinet was no stranger to the secret negotiations which had been going on between the ministers of Charles X. and those of the Emperor Nicholas for the resumption of the frontier of the Rhine by France, in return for its acquiescence in the designs of Russia against Constantinople. The same knowledge extended to the cabinet of

considérations qui ont guidé votre Majesté; mais je forme des vœux pour que la Providence divine veuille bénir les intentions et les efforts qu'elle va faire pour le bonheur du peuple Français. De concert avec mes alliés, je me plais à accueillir le désir que votre Majesté a exprimé d'entretenir des relations de paix et d'amitié avec tous les états de l'Europe, tant qu'elles seront basées sur les traités existans, et sur la ferme volonté de respecter les droits et les obligations, ainsi que l'état de possession territoriale qu'ils ont consacrés. L'Europe y trouvera une garantie de la paix si nécessaire au repos de la France elle même. Appelé, conjointement avec mes alliés, à cultiver avec la France, sous son gouvernement, ces relations conservatives, j'y apporterai, de ma part, toute la sollicitude qu'elles réclament."—CAPEFIGUE, vol. ii. p. 471.

Berlin, whose Rhenish provinces were more immediately threatened by these designs of Chateaubriand and the Polignac Ministry.[1] The recognition of the King of the French by Frederick-William, accordingly, was more prompt and cordial than that even of the cabinet of Vienna. Count Lobau, who was sent to Berlin, met with the most cordial reception, at the very time when General Baudrand was receiving the same at the court of London; and all that was asked in return was the faithful observance of the treaties of 1815.[2]

[1] Ante, c. xvii.; § 49.

[2] Cap. ii. 461, 462.

51. Character of Louis Philippe: opposite views of it.

LOUIS PHILIPPE, who thus, by the force of circumstances, and the influence of dissimulation and fraud, obtained possession of the throne of France, is, of all recent sovereigns, the one concerning whose character the most difference of opinion has prevailed. By some, who were impressed with the length and general success of his reign, he was regarded as a man of the greatest capacity; and the "Napoleon of peace" was triumphantly referred to as having achieved that which the "Napoleon of war" had sought in vain to effect. The prudent and cautious statesman who, during a considerable portion of his reign, guided the affairs of England,* had, it is well known, the highest opinion of his wisdom and judgment. By others, and especially the Royalists, whom he had dispossessed, and the Republicans, whom he had disappointed, he was regarded as a mere successful tyrant, who won a crown by perfidy, and maintained it by corruption, and in whom it was hard to say whether profound powers of dissimulation, or innate selfishness of disposition, were most conspicuous. And in the close of all, his conduct belied the assertions, and disappointed the expectations of both; for, when he fell from the throne, he neither exhibited the vigour which was anticipated by his admirers, nor the selfishness which was imputed to him by his enemies.

In truth, however, he was consistent throughout; and

* Sir R. Peel.

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52. Explanation of its seeming contradictions.

when his character comes to be surveyed in the historic mirror, the same features are everywhere conspicuous. His elevation, his duration, and his fall, are seen to have been all brought about by the same qualities. He rose to greatness, and was so long maintained in it, because he was the man of the age; but that age was neither an age of heroism nor of virtue, but of selfishness. He was the Octavius of the French Revolution; and, like him, he succeeded its Cæsar by bringing into play, and himself possessing, the ruling qualities which invariably, after a long period of social convulsions, become predominant in the public mind. Those qualities are prudence and selfishness. The generous passions which commenced the conflagration have been burnt out, or become extinct by disappointment. The noble, the chivalrous, the high-minded on all sides have perished in the conflict, as the boldest knights, the bravest regiments, disappear after a protracted warfare. The multitude alone remained, and the ruling principle with the multitude always is, in the long run, selfishness. They are capable of great and heroic efforts during a period of excitement; but with the first lull the sway of the selfish feelings always recommences. This was the character of the age of Augustus; this was the character of that emperor himself: this was the character of the age of Louis Philippe; and this was the character of the Citizen King.

53. Features, good and bad, of his character.

His leading characteristic was prudence, his ruling principle selfishness, his great power dissimulation, his chief weakness irresolution. Personally brave, and capable of heading a charge of cavalry or mounting a breach, he was, like many other men similarly endowed with physical courage, timorous in the extreme when it became necessary to take a decided line. His long-continued indecision, when the crown was tendered to him, was the exact counterpart of the timidity with which, in the end, he shrunk from an encounter for its preservation. *In the* interval between the two, he always exhibited firmness

and consistency of government, and occasionally decided proofs of personal resolution; but that was because he was not required then to take a line; *the line was chosen, and he had only to follow it out.* Prudent and discerning in his estimate of others, he selected able men for his advisers; but, by the native powers of his understanding, he always preserved the ascendant over them, and imprinted a steady and consistent character on his government, though nominally directed by many different cabinets. His intellectual powers were his own; but the consistency and stability of his government are known to have been mainly owing to the influence and counsels of his sister, the Princess Amélie,—a princess endowed with uncommon moral courage and strength of mind, to whose advice he was chiefly indebted for his elevation to the throne, and whose loss was at once discerned in the facility with which he was precipitated from it.

54. Vicissitudes of his life, and impress they had affixed to his character.

The vicissitudes of his life had exceeded everything that romance had figured, or imagination could have conceived. The gallery of portraits in the sumptuous halls of the Palais Royal exhibited him with truth, alternately a young prince basking in the sunshine of rank and opulence at Paris, a soldier combating under the tricolor flag at Valmy, a schoolmaster instructing his humble scholars in Switzerland, a fugitive in misery in America, a sovereign on the throne of France. These extraordinary changes had made him as thoroughly acquainted with the ruling principles of human nature in all grades, as the misfortunes of his own house, the recollection of his father guillotined, had with the perils by which, in his exalted rank, he was environed. Essentially ruled by the selfish, he was incapable of feeling the generous emotions; like all egotists, he was ungrateful. Thankfulness finds a place only in a warm heart. He was long deterred from accepting the crown by the prospect of the risk with which it would be attended to himself, but not for one moment by the reflection that, in taking it, he was

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becoming a traitor to his sovereign, a renegade to his order, a recreant to his benefactor. His hypocrisy, to the last moment, to Charles X., was equalled only by his stern and hard-hearted rigour to his family, when he had an opportunity of making some return for their benefactions. His government was extremely expensive; it at once added a third to the expenditure of Charles X., as the Long Parliament had done to that of Charles I.; and it was mainly based on corruption. This, however, is not to be imputed to him as a fault, further than as being a direct consequence of the way in which he obtained the throne. When the "unbought loyalty of men" has come to an end, government has no hold but of their selfish desires, and must rule by them; and when the "cheap defence of nations" has terminated, the costly empire of force must commence. As a set-off to these dark stains upon his moral character, there are many bright spots on his political one. He stood between Europe and the plague of revolution, and, by the temperance of his language and wisdom of his measures, at once conciliated the absolute Continental sovereigns, when they might have been expected to be hostile, and overawed the discontented in his own country when they were most threatening.

55. Extreme difficulties with which he had to contend.

But although Louis Philippe was thus universally acquiesced in in France, and received, in a manner beyond all hope, favourably by the whole sovereigns of Europe, yet was his situation at home full of danger; and he was called to a task which the greatest abilities, and the most consummate wisdom, might have despaired of accomplishing. A revolutionary monarch, he was called to coerce revolution; raised to the throne under the shadow of the tricolor flag, he was obliged to restrain the desire which the sight of it awakened; a king elevated by the bourgeoisie, he was under the necessity of greatly augmenting the national expenses, and thwarting the passion for economy which is the ruling principle of that class. Indebted for his throne to the heroes of the barricades, he could

not maintain it but by continually disappointing their expectations. His whole reign, accordingly, was a constant denial of its origin; his whole efforts, and they were many and able, were directed to restrain the passions by which he had been elevated, and extinguish the party to which he owed his greatness. Government could not, by possibility, be established on a more insecure basis, and, accordingly, the rancour with which he soon came to be regarded much exceeded any which had been manifested to Charles X. If the weight of these circumstances is considered, it will not appear extraordinary that Louis Philippe was in the end overturned; but the wonder will rather be that he succeeded in maintaining himself so long upon the throne.

The thorns were not long of showing themselves. In the Cabinet itself dissension was soon apparent. M. Lafitte, accustomed, by his previous intimacy with the Orléans family, to the language and manners of courts, was measured and respectful in his language, but M. de Lafayette had the utmost difficulty in coercing the violence and rudeness of his Republican allies. M. Dupont de l'Eure, in particular, distinguished himself by the vehemence of his democratic ideas, and his constant prophecies of disaster if his projects were not all carried into execution. The Republican journals loudly proclaimed that "the country was ruined" whenever he succeeded in carrying anything before him in the Council. Every day Lafayette was besieged with deputations from the national guards of all the principal towns of France. Most of them were not yet dressed in uniform, but appeared in the republican blouse, ornamented only with a bunch of tricolor ribbons. Though worn out with cabinet councils of four or five hours' duration, Louis Philippe was obliged to receive these rude deputations, some of which showed by their haughty manner that they regarded themselves as masters, rather than servants, of the crown.[1]

CAP. Dissensions in the Council, and violence of the National Guard deputation.

[1] Cap. iii. 3, 9.

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57. Suspicious death and testament of the Duke de Bourbon.

An incident occurred at this time which powerfully tended to depopularise the Government, and increase the sinister rumours which already began to circulate concerning its head. For many years past the old Duke of Bourbon, who united in his person the honours of the two most noble families in France, had lived in retirement at St Leu, the mansion-house on one of his vast estates. Profoundly afflicted by the misfortunes of his family, the last and most deserving of which had been murdered by Napoleon at Vincennes, he lived alone, "between," as has been finely said, "the ancient tomb of his ancestors in the vaults of St Denis, and the recent grave of his son in the fosse of Vincennes." The only companion of his solitude was the Baroness de Feuchères, an artful and unprincipled courtesan, who had acquired the ascendancy over him which youth and beauty so easily do over the feeble decrepitude of age, and who, to much of the talent which sometimes distinguishes, united all the cupidity which in general disgraces women, in whatever rank, of her profession. Nothing was more natural than that the childless old man of seventy should choose an heir out of the illustrious house of Orléans, with which he was closely connected, and thereby prevent that division of his estates among his heirs-at-law, if he died intestate, which would otherwise have taken place. If he had done so in the ordinary way, and died a natural death, though it might have awakened some envy, it could have excited no surprise. But a mournful tragedy rendered the matter the subject of deep interest, painfully aggravated by the mystery with which it was and still continues enveloped. The Duke of Bourbon, on the morning of the 27th August, was found dead in his bedroom, strangled by a silk handkerchief suspended from a nail in his chamber. The Baroness de Feuchères was the only person above the rank of a domestic in the house at the time, and her bedroom communicated by an interior passage with that of the prince when the *catastrophe* occurred.[1]

Aug. 27.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 265; Cap. iii. 17, 22; Louis Blanc, ii. 57, 61.

The conduct of the Duke had been strange for some time, and a letter is said to have been written shortly before his death, indicating a feeling of approaching death.* On the other hand, the appearance of the body when discovered, and in particular the extreme tightness with which the handkerchief was tied round his neck, were such as to militate strongly against the idea of suicide. Madame de Feuchères strongly supported the latter opinion, and advanced all she could in its support. Opinions, as usual in such cases, were much divided, and the public mind was strongly excited by so deplorable a termination of a long and illustrious line, when an entirely new current was given to the affair, and it assumed a political aspect, by the announcement that the whole movable property of the deceased, amounting to 4,000,000 francs (£160,000), was left to the Baroness de Feuchères, and his immense landed estates to the Duke d'Aumale, fourth son of Louis Philippe. There was no evidence, direct or indirect, to connect the new sovereign with the magnificent bequest; but people recollected the maxim of Macchiavelli—"If you would discover the author of a crime, see who is to profit by it;" and the suspicions afloat on the subject were much increased by the magnificent reception which Madame de Feuchères soon after publicly received at the Tuileries. The people, ever credulous of the marvellous, and thirsting for the horrible, put all these things together; and the report spread by the Republicans soon received general credit, that the prince had been assassinated, and that those who shared the succession were the parties implicated in it.[1]

Injurious reports spread abroad by the bequest of the Duke's property to the Duke d'Aumale.

[1] Louis Blanc, ii. 67, 71; Cap. ii. 23, 26; Ann. Hist. xiii. 266, 267.

A more serious subject of disquietude for the cabinet

* "St Leu et ses dépendances appartiennent à votre roi, Louis Philippe. Ne pillez, ni ne brûlez le château ni le village. Ne faites de mal ni à mes amis, ni à mes gens. On vous a égaré sur mon compte, je n'ai qu'à mourir en souhaitant bonheur et prosperité au peuple Français et à ma patrie. Adieu pour toujours." Sign. L. H. J. DE BOURBON, Prince de Condé.—"P.S. Je demande à être enterré à Vincennes auprès de mon infortuné fils."—CAPEFIGUE, vol. iii. p. 23; L. BLANC. vol. ii. p. 65.

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59. Attitude of M. de Lafayette, and its dangers.

of Louis Philippe arose from the attitude and proceedings of Lafayette. He had been declared Commander-in-chief of the National Guards of France, as a reward for his acquiescence in the advancement of Louis Philippe to the throne; but it was soon doubtful whether his position in that capacity would not soon overshadow that of the monarch on the throne. Night and day he was beset with deputations from the National Guards of Paris and the neighbouring provinces, most of them of a highly democratic and even republican character, with whom he entered into familiar conversations eminently threatening to the new-born dynasty. "We must," said he, "let the government go on, appreciate it, and judge it. The people, in the last resort, always remain sovereign, and nothing is more easy than to undo what we have done." To counteract this dangerous influence, the King had a grand review of the National Guard of Paris, sixty thousand strong, to whom he presented their colours. In a letter to General Lafayette as their commander, couched in the most flattering terms, he declared that the legions he had witnessed were superior to the forty-eight battalions raised in 1792, and which had so powerfully contributed to the deliverance of France at Valmy. But notwithstanding these cordial appearances in public, it was already apparent that the seeds of irremediable jealousy were already sown between the King and the Commander-in-chief of the National Guard, and that, if the former was to maintain his throne, the latter must be dismissed from his command.[1]

1 Moniteur, Aug. 31, 1830; Cap. iii. 31, 32; Ann. Hist. xiii. 271, 272.

60. Disturbances in Paris.

Already also appearances had assumed a threatening aspect at Paris. Thousands of workmen, thrown out of employment, and who had already experienced in all their bitterness the effects of revolution, crowded the Prefecture of Police, the hotels of the Ministers, and the Palais Royal, demanding bread or work, in terms so menacing as scarcely to admit of a refusal. So threatening did they become that it became necessary to get M. de

Lafayette, as commander of the National Guard, to issue proclamations urging them to disperse, and promising employment. Great uneasiness also was experienced from the arrest of M. de Polignac, the ex-minister of Charles X., at Grandville, M. de Peyronnet, M. de Chantelauze, and M. de Guernon Ranville, at Tours, who were brought to Vincennes under a powerful escort of national guards, and, by the excitement which their presence occasioned, seriously increased the embarrassments of the Government.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 269, 270; Moniteur, Sept. 5, 1830.

61. First legislative measures of the new Government.

The legislative measures of the new Government evinced the cautious spirit with which it was animated, and the desire felt to render the Revolution productive of as few organic changes as was consistent with the excited temper of the people. Two of the most obnoxious laws of the Restoration—that of 12th January 1816, defining, with numerous exceptions, the general amnesty which had been proclaimed for the events of the Hundred Days, and that of 1825, annexing the punishment of death for the crime of sacrilege, or theft in churches—were repealed. The strength of parties under the new Government was evinced by the division for the choice of a President of the Chamber of Deputies, on the resignation of M. Casimir Périer. M. Lafitte obtained 245 votes out of 256—a majority so great as to prove that the Revolution had produced its usual effect of extinguishing independence of thought, and that the debates of the legislature had become mere form.[2]

[2] Ann. Hist. xiii. 277, 295.

62. Discussion on the Electoral Law.

A more important subject of discussion arose soon after in the Chamber of Deputies, regarding the adoption of the electoral system proposed by the Government, which was the same as that agreed to in the modification of the constitution before the crown was offered to Louis Philippe. The project of Government was carried by a majority of 234 out of 246 votes, which sufficiently indicated how strongly the Chamber was disposed to support the throne.[3] But the tone of the debate, and the language used by several orators, pointed to a change at no distant period

[3] Ann. Hist. xiii. 299, 305.

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in the Electoral Law, and may be regarded as the precursor of the important alterations in the composition of the Chamber in the succeeding year.

63. First financial measures of the new Government.

But more pressing interests soon came to occupy the new Government. The state of the finances was the most pressing; for the Revolution had enormously augmented the demands on the Government, while it had proportionally diminished its receipts. The expedition to Algiers, too, however glorious, had been attended with a very heavy expense, which was by no means entirely provided for by the previous votes. To meet the deficit, Ministers asked and obtained a supplementary vote of credit for 67,490,000 francs (£2,560,000). The receipts of the year were estimated at 979,787,000 francs (£39,200,000), and its expenditure 1,050,116,000 francs, or £42,100,000, which rendered the vote of credit necessary. But events were now approaching which threatened to embroil the new government of France with the European powers, and, by rendering a great increase of the army necessary, involved it in a series of financial embarrassments which rendered a great increase of taxation necessary, and from the effects of which it never recovered.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 313, 314; Moniteur, Sept 23, 1830.

64. Proceedings against the popular societies. Sept 25.

The popular societies soon became formidable; and it was evident that the great contest of Ministers would be with their own supporters rather than the Royalists, whom they had overthrown. On the 21st September a great procession took place in the Place de Grève, to commemorate the execution of Borier and three other young men, who had suffered death there some years ago, for their accession to the conspiracy of Rochelle. So great was the alarm felt on this occasion, that all the shops were shut in the districts through which the procession passed, and a large body of national guards were under arms to preserve the public peace. It passed over without any disturbance; and by a singular and striking coincidence, a petition for the abolition of the punishment of death was

prepared, and unanimously agreed to, on the very spot, and at the table on which these gallant and unfortunate young men had suffered. This event, however, gave Government an opportunity of stating their views on these societies, in the course of a discussion on a petition presented by some commissaries on the subject. They were denounced in the loudest terms by the Ministers, as being the real cause of the alarm which existed, and the consequent stagnation of commerce and distress of the working classes.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 316, 317; Moniteur, Sept. 26, 1830.

65. Speech of the Minister of the Interior on the subject.

"What," said the Minister of the Interior, "are the characteristics of the revolutionary régime? If I do not deceive myself, the most remarkable are a disposition to call everything in question, an immense mass of indefinite pretensions and continual appeals to force. All these features are united in the popular societies. There is no longer discussion on vague theories or philosophical questions. It is the very foundation of Government which is continually brought under discussion; the necessity of revolution, the distribution of property, the law of succession. Thus numbers are kept in a state of continual and increasing fermentation, which is the worst enemy of real political reform. There is a constant appeal to force, as the ultimate umpire of all disputes; a continual war against all the powers of society, and all ideas which do not completely accord with their own. We, too, wish for progress; but it is such a progress as may be durable, not such as can end only in destroying itself. They speak of the wishes of France; but the desires they express are not those of France, but of a knot of revolutionists at Paris, who desire to elevate themselves by keeping France in a state of permanent revolution." Wise counsel, undoubtedly! but not very palatable to those who had just achieved a revolution, and beheld others in the quiet enjoyment of its fruits.[2] The Chamber supported Ministers almost unanimously; but the societies were not discouraged, and a few days after, that of *les Amis du Peuple*

[2] Ann. Hist. xiii. 319, 320.

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violated the laws so flagrantly in their hall in the Rue Pellier that they were dissolved by force, and the president brought before the police tribunals.

66. Attempt to revolutionise Spain from Paris.

The news of the French Revolution, which excited so powerfully the revolutionary party all over the world, early attracted to Paris a crowd of refugees from all countries, and especially Spain, who immediately formed a committee there, the object of which was to revolutionise the kingdoms of the Peninsula as they had done that of France. M. Mendizabal, Isturiz, Calatrava, San Miguel, the Duke de Rivas, Martinez de la Rosa, Count Toreno, and other Spanish Liberals, who had been banished from their country since the re-establishment of the absolute government of Ferdinand VII. by the invasion of the Duke d'Angoulême in 1823, formed its principal members. With them were united the leading French Liberals—in particular, M. Dupont de l'Eure, Viardot, Etienne Arago, Garnier Pagès, and others, who entered cordially into the plan, subscribed considerable sums, and prepared arms and troops for carrying their designs into execution. The Spanish government, aware of what was going forward, refused to recognise the government of Louis Philippe, and both parties openly prepared for hostilities.[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, ii. 78, 79; Cap. iii. 315, 332.

67. Which is secretly favoured by Louis Philippe and his Ministers.

It was of the utmost moment to the Spanish revolutionists to obtain the countenance, however indirect, of the French government, and they were not long of obtaining it. General Sébastiani alone of the Ministers opposed the intervention; all the others supported it. "Tell those who sent you," said M. Guizot to M. Louis Viardot, who appeared on the part of the revolutionary committee, "that France committed a great political crime in 1823; she owes to Spain a striking reparation, and that reparation shall be made." When introduced by M. Odillon Barrot to the King, his majesty received the deputation in the most gracious manner. He admitted that France was menaced with a war on the Rhine; that

a storm might any day break on her from the north, and that it was of the last importance that it should be secured from any other attack. He admitted that the protection given by Ferdinand VII. to the Carlist refugees in the south was alarming, and that it behoved them to see that there were no longer any Pyrenees. "As to Ferdinand VII.," he added, "you may hang him if you please; he is the greatest scoundrel that ever existed." Finding the dispositions of the King and his ministers thus favourable, the deputies of the committee ventured to propose to him their views, which were to dethrone Ferdinand VII., offer the crown to the Duke de Nemours, second son of Louis Philippe, who was to espouse Donna Maria, the heiress of Spain, and secure the lasting influence of France to the south of the Pyrenees, by effecting a similar revolution in Portugal, and annexing it to the crown of Castile. How agreeable soever these projects might be to the real wishes of Louis Philippe, he dreaded too much embroiling himself with the northern powers to espouse them openly, and he contented himself, therefore, with promising them his secret support, and sending 60,000 francs to Bayonne by M. Chevallon, and 40,000 to Marseilles by Colonel Moreno.[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, ii. 79, 81; Cap. iii. 324, 326.

68. The enterprise is undertaken, and fails.

Secure then of the secret support of the French government, the Spanish revolutionists commenced active measures for effecting the dethronement of the house of Bourbon at Madrid. The persons engaged in the enterprise were secretly furnished with arms by M. Montalavet, the Minister of the Interior, and M. Guizot, and despatched by twos and threes, so as not to excite suspicion, to Bayonne. General Mina, who was in Paris, had a private interview with Marshal Gerard, who assured him of the warm sympathy, and promised him the secret support of the French government. "Take care, however," he added, "to hazard nothing: set out without delay for Bayonne; but swear to engage in no enterprise till France is relieved of all anxiety on the side of Europe."

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But this advice was too wise and judicious to suit the disposition of the Spanish revolutionists, who, like all refugees, were credulous and sanguine in the extreme, and impatient for the moment of terminating their painful suspense. Despite all counsels to the contrary, accordingly, they made preparations for crossing the Bidassoa, and in the middle of October the attempt was made by five hundred refugees. But experience had taught the Spanish troops the real tendency of revolutionary government, and it ended in a signal defeat. A small band of the boldest, under Chapalangarra, was first struck down by a volley from a Spanish outpost, which killed the leader, and dispersed his band. This disaster, like most first defeats in civil conflicts, proved fatal to the whole enterprise. Valdez, with another body, was speedily surrounded at Vera, and if not rescued was sure to perish. To effect his deliverance Mina set out from Bayonne, and, having collected a considerable force, made himself master of the important town of Irun. But there terminated his success. The Spanish Royalists accumulated round them on all sides; Valdez, defeated in an attack on a fortified convent near Vera, was obliged to fly across the French frontier, with the loss of three-fourths of his forces; Vigo, who commanded a third band of two hundred men, was shut up at Maulian; and Mina himself, surrounded by ten thousand Royalists, was driven from the heights of San Marcial, where he had taken post: his followers dispersed; and he himself only escaped, severely wounded and covered with blood, after having walked thirty-eight leagues in forty-two hours, through the thick woods and rugged ridges of the Pyrenees. Similar attempts on the side of Catalonia proved equally unfortunate; and in the beginning of November the revolutionary bands were defeated on all sides, and tranquillity restored along the whole French frontier.[1]

Oct. 15.

Oct. 18.

Oct. 27.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 693, 696; Louis Blanc, ii. 83, 86.

This check to the propagandists excited little discourage-

State of Belgium, and its dispositions.

ment in France, in consequence of the signal success which attended at the same time their efforts in another quarter. BELGIUM was the country upon which the chief hopes of the revolutionists were fixed. This beautiful country, the richest and most favoured by nature of any in Europe to the north of the Alps, long dissevered by religious dissension and the atrocious cruelty of Philip II. and the Duke of Alva, had at length been reunited, and the most signal prosperity had attended the reunion. The old seventeen provinces, the garden of northern Europe, united under one paternal government, had been eminently prosperous since the Kingdom of the Netherlands had been established in 1814. Even the desperate inroad of Napoleon, closed by the disaster of Waterloo in the succeeding year, had only given a temporary check to their prosperity. The taxes were moderate, and sufficient for the expenses of government; a respectable army, and the guarantee of the allied powers, secured the national independence; the frontier fortresses towards France had been put in the best possible state of defence, chiefly at the expense of Great Britain, which had assigned to that important object the whole of the share which its Government received of the indemnity levied on France by the second treaty of Paris; and although, as is always the case on a union, there were several points in dispute between Holland and Belgium, and the inhabitants of the former country lamented the loss of the seat of government, and those of the latter complained that, in the allocation of burdens, too large a portion of the public debt had been laid upon them, yet, upon the whole, there was great external prosperity, and, to appearance, great internal contentment, among the inhabitants of the united kingdom. A system of representation, neither aristocratic nor oligarchical, secured a due attention to the interests of the various branches of industry in the country, and the deliberations of the Chambers had, of late years, been distinguished by a remarkable concordance on objects

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of general good. This concord had been in an especial manner conspicuous during the last session of the Chambers; and the Minister of the Interior, in closing them on June 2, had only expressed the general voice when he said, "that the session had been remarkable for the extent of its labours and the divergence of its opinions, crowned by the most happy accordance between the throne and the representatives of the people, on the subjects of the greatest interest to both."[1]

[1] Moniteur, June 5, 1830, Ann. Hist. xiii. 536, 538.

70. Causes of discord among the inhabitants.

But vain are all attempts to establish a real concord among men, how loudly soever called for by their material interests, when their hearts are kept asunder by any of the master passions which agitate and disturb mankind. The two most powerful of these were in secret fomenting discord among the inhabitants, and renewing, even under the paternal sceptre of one monarch, the ancient jealousies of the Flemings and the United Provinces. These passions were religious jealousy and democratic ambition. It is remarkable that the hereditary animosity of the Catholics and Protestants nowhere in Europe, save in Ireland, existed in more rancour than between the long-severed inhabitants of the seventeen Provinces. The clergy of Flanders, in their cathedrals, their palaces, had all the pride, and not a little of the persecuting spirit, of the Duke of Alva; those of the United Provinces were animated by the indomitable spirit of Count Egmont or William of Nassau. Reconciliation was impossible between persuasions animated by such discordant feelings; and the attempt of the Government to reconcile both parties by an equitable arrangement and entire toleration, ended only, as is often the case, in irritating both parties, and reconciling neither.[2]

[2] Ann. Hist. xiii. 538, 539.

In addition to this, the democratic passions in Flanders, violently excited by the successful result of the Revolution in Paris, contributed also, in the most powerful manner, to bring about a convulsion, and sever the union between that country and Holland. In Brussels and the other

great cities of Flanders, the democratic spirit had for centuries been strong; and this disposition had been much strengthened in later times by the desire for French connection, and the number of interests which had been affected by the severance of the union with that country, and the breaking up of the imperial sway. When men's minds were in this excited state, no amount of general prosperity and material well-being could appease them, and little was wanting, at any time, to blow the discontent, at least among some classes, into a flame. This little was at once furnished by the French Revolution. The clubs of Paris, who possessed an influence in France equal, and in the adjoining states superior to Louis Philippe, immediately sent several agents to excite the revolutionary passions in Belgium. They were received with open arms by the clubs of Brussels, Ghent, and Antwerp, and measures were quickly concocted for following the example of Paris, and dethroning the King of the Netherlands. In this attempt they relied with reason upon the support of the whole democratic party in the Flemish towns, and on that section of the community which, without being inclined to support a republican form of government, was desirous of severing the connection with Holland, and establishing a régime in which the Protestant faith was no longer to be tolerated, and the Catholic might be reinstated in exclusive power and pristine grandeur.[1]

71. Revolutionary party in Belgium, and its great increase by the events in Paris in July.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 536, 539; Louis Blanc, ii. 88, 89; Cap. iii. 69, 70.

Matters were brought to a crisis by the revolutionists on the 25th August, just a month after they had commenced at Paris. After leaving the theatre, where the play of *La Muette* had been performed, which contained several sentiments eagerly caught at and loudly applauded by the popular party, a number of enthusiastic young men collected in the streets, singing revolutionary songs, and the cry was heard among them, "*Imitons les Parisiens.*" Suiting the action to the word, they immediately proceeded to attack and plunder the printing-office of a ministerial journal, break open several armourers' shops,

72. Commencement of the revolution.

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and provide themselves with the weapons they contained; while several huge tricolor flags were suddenly unfurled, and excited in the highest degree the enthusiasm of the multitude. They then proceeded to set fire to the hotel of the Minister of Justice, M. Van Maanen, which was speedily reduced to ashes. General Wanthin, the commander of the town, who tried to arrest the disorders with a detachment of troops, was surrounded and made prisoner.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 539, 541; Louis Blanc, ii. 88, 89; Dépêche, 26 Aout, 1830; Cap. iii. 71, note.

73. Progress of the insurrection.

With the rapidity of lightning these disorders were imitated at Ghent, Liege, Antwerp, and all the chief towns of Flanders. The royal troops made very little resistance; so completely did the movement assume a national aspect, and run from the first into an effort to separate Belgium from Holland. The bourgeois in the great towns supported this movement, though they endeavoured to detach it from the cause of revolution, to which they were very little inclined. The populace, however, especially in Brussels and Ghent, were by no means inclined to halt midway in their career, but openly endeavoured to overturn the government by force, and establish a republic in its stead. At five in the morning of the 26th, the troops were drawn out, volleys of musketry were heard in the Place des Sablons, and the people began to cut down trees in the Park, and unpave the streets to form barricades. The troops were too few in number to make head against the insurgents, who now began to show themselves in all quarters of the city, and overawed the soldiers as much by the spectacle of unanimity as they overwhelmed them by their numbers. Ere long the hotel of the Minister of Police, and of the governor of the capital, fell into the hands of the insurgents, and the work of destruction commenced.[2] Several steam-machines were destroyed, many shops pillaged, and symptoms of the war of labour against property, of the proletaires against machinery, began to appear. Alarmed at this turn the

Aug. 26.

[2] Ann. Hist. xiii. 540, 541; Cap. iii. 71, 73; Louis Blanc, ii. 89, 90.

affair was taking, the shopkeepers turned out, and formed a large Burgher Guard, 8000 strong, which in a manner interposed between the contending parties, and, by the respect which they inspired to both parties, suspended hostilities. CHAP. XXIV. 1830.

74. Negotiations of the insurgents with the King. Aug. 30.

The Burgher Guard, which was most anxious to terminate the dispute, and recover the lost nationality of the Belgians, without endangering the crown on the head of William of Nassau, presented, in the midst of these disorders, a petition to the King, in which they prayed him "to dismiss the minister Van Maanen, so odious to their national feelings, and give *a separate administration to Belgium*, hitherto devoted to the house of Nassau, of which they did not wish to break the sceptre." The King returned for answer, "That he would abide by the text of the compact—that is to say, by the law; that his resolution would depend on a vote of the Estates; that if that assembly determined on a separation of the kingdom, he would conform to it; and that, for that purpose, the Estates should be immediately convoked." At the same time, he ordered the Prince of Orange, the heir-apparent of the crown of the Netherlands, to repair to Brussels, in order to ascertain the sentiments of the bourgeoisie, and see what would really satisfy them. Emboldened by this success, the burghers next demanded that he should come alone, without an escort, and without uniform or arms. This also was conceded, so anxious was the Government to pacify the people by every imaginable concession; and on the 1st September the Prince, one of the heroes of Waterloo, arrived at Brussels in plain clothes, and without an escort. He was received with respect by the Burgher Guard, which escorted him into the city under the guarantee of safety to his person, and liberty to depart, if he could not succeed in effecting an accommodation.[1]

Sept. 1. [1] Louis Blanc, ii. 89, 90; Ann. Hist. xiii. 540, 548; Cap. iii. 73, 75; Moniteur, Sept. 4, 1830.

The Prince, in passing through the streets, was received with cries of "*Vive le Prince! Vive la liberté! A bas*

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75. Demands of the leaders of the revolution.

*Van Maanen!*" but he beheld on all sides convincing proofs of the serious nature of the insurrection. Barricades required to be passed in many places; the cross-streets were all blocked up, and armed men at the windows gave fearful proof of the murderous warfare which awaited the troops if hostilities were resumed. Even before he arrived at the Hôtel de Ville, it had become evident that an accommodation was impossible. The deputations, which succeeded each other with rapidity at the Hôtel de Ville, expressed their wishes clearly; the word "separation" was heard, but no wish was expressed to unite with France; and the Prince of Orange returned on the 4th to his army at Vilvorde, with the hope that he might still retain his throne. The yellow cockade was everywhere abandoned; but there was no disposition evinced to break finally with the house of Nassau. Soon after, a deputation waited on the King with a formal and concise statement of their grievances and demands; and for a brief period the hope was entertained that he might retain both crowns, on the condition, as in the case of Austria and Hungary, of an entire separation of offices and administration.* But these hopes were soon found to be fallacious. The wish for a separation from Holland was so generally expressed that it was obviously irresistible; and the Prince carried back the mournful conviction that the union could no longer be maintained.[1]

[1] Cap. iii. 75, 77; Ann. Hist. xiii. 545, 547.

* The demands of the Belgian revolutionists were: "1. L'exécution entière, franche et sincère, de la loi fondamentale, mais sans restrictions ni interprétations au profit du pouvoir, soit par arrêtés circulaires ministériels ou rescrits du cabinet. 2. L'éloignement du ministre de l'intérieur et de l'odieux Van Maanen. 3. La suspension provisoire de l'abatage jusqu'à la prochaine session des états généraux. 4. Un nouveau système électoral établi par une loi, où l'élection soit plus directe par le peuple. 5. Le rétablissement du jury. 6. Une loi nouvelle de l'organisation judiciaire. 7. La responsabilité pénale des ministres établis par la loi. 8. Une loi qui fixe le siège de la haute cour dans les provinces méridionales. 9. La cessation des poursuites intentées aux écrivains libéraux. 10. L'annulation de toutes les condamnations en matières politiques. 11. Qu'il soit distribué à tous les ouvriers infortunés du pain pour subvenir à leurs besoins jusqu'à ce qu'ils pussent reprendre leurs travaux."—*Ann. Hist.* vol. xiii. p. 546.

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The Estates of the kingdom were convoked for the 13th September, and on that day they assembled from all quarters; and the session was opened with great pomp by the King in person, accompanied by the Prince of Orange. It was impossible to imagine a more august or solemn occasion; for the assembly was to deliberate not only on the fundamental laws of the kingdom, but on the maintenance of the connection with Holland, as fixed by the Congress of Vienna. The speech of William was dignified and moderate, and in every respect worthy of the occasion. "To go back," said the monarch with emotion, "to the causes of the past, to scrutinise them with your high mightinesses, to seize their true character, is less urgent than to seek the means of re-establishing the authority of the laws, so violently shaken by the late commotions. But in the midst of the shock of ideas, and of the clash of conflicting opinions, it is no easy matter to reconcile my wishes for the happiness of my subjects with the duties which I have contracted towards all, and which I have consecrated by my oaths. I earnestly implore, therefore, your firm and calm consideration, in order that, fortified by the opinions of the national representatives, I may adopt such measures as the safety of the country demands. One party contends for a revision of the fundamental law of our union, and even the separation of the Provinces. This can only be done, you are aware, in the form prescribed by the fundamental act of our constitution. I pray only that you may approach it with the deliberation and caution which its importance deserves. Entirely disposed to satisfy all reasonable wishes, I will accord nothing to the spirit of faction; I will never consent to measures which may sacrifice the interests and prosperity of the nation to the passions and to violence. Reconcile, if you can, all interests; that is the sole wish of my heart."[1]

76. Speech of the King on opening the Chambers. Sept. 13.

[1] Cap. iii. 78, 79.

Nothing could be more judicious or conciliatory than this language; but the time was passed when it could

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77. The army is directed by the King and Chambers on Brussels. Sept. 23.

command any attention. The passions of the populace were so strongly roused by the prospect of the successful revolution in Paris, of the clergy and burghers by the hope of an approaching severance from Holland, that the voice of reason and patriotism had no longer a chance of being heard. The working classes, thrown by thousands out of employment by the public convulsions, and who, by the force of numbers, had got possession of Brussels, Ghent, Liege, and other towns, had already proceeded to acts of pillage; disorders in the streets were frequent; and the burghers, whose representatives formed the great majority, were dreadfully alarmed at the prospect of the destruction of their property or the cessation of their profits. To terminate these dangers, the King, on the recommendation of the Chambers, gave the command of the army at Vilvorde to Prince Frederick, a brave soldier, who justly possessed the confidence of the troops, with instructions to advance to Brussels, re-establish the authority of Government, protect property, and leave the national representatives at liberty to deliberate in safety on the important matters waiting their determination. Having published a proclamation, accordingly, explaining his views and the orders he had received, he moved his troops towards Brussels.[1]*

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 556, 557; Cap. iii. 78, 79; Louis Blanc, ii. 104, 106.

The approach of the Prince at the head of nine

* "Tandis qu'avec un zèle et une activité dignes des plus grands éloges, vous veillez à la défense des propriétés publiques et particulières, un petit nombre de factieux cachés parmi vous excite la populace au pillage, l'armée au déshonneur; les intentions royales sont dénaturées, les autorités sans force, la liberté opprimée. Conformément aux ordres du roi, nous venons apporter à cet état des choses qui ruine votre cité, et éloigne de plus en plus, pour cette résidence royale, la possibilité d'être le séjour du monarque, et de l'héritier du trône, le seul remède véritable et efficace, le rétablissement de l'ordre légal. Les légions nationales vont entrer dans vos murs, au nom des lois, et à la demande des meilleurs citoyens, pour les soulager tous d'un service pénible, et pour prêter aide et protection. Une sage amnistie s'étendra sur les fautes et les démarches irrégulières que les circonstances ont produites. Les auteurs principaux d'actes trop criminels pour espérer d'échapper à la sévérité des lois, des étrangers qui, abusant de l'hospitalité, sont venus organiser parmi vous ce désordre, seront seuls et justement frappés. Leur cause n'a rien de commun avec la vôtre.—FREDERICK. 21st Sept. 1830."—CAPEFIGUE, *vol. iii.* p. 79.

thousand men, twenty-six guns, and two howitzers, on the road from Antwerp towards Brussels, produced the utmost excitement in the latter city. The French emissaries and democratic leaders, who were openly denounced in the proclamation by which his advance was preceded, were indefatigable in their efforts to rouse the populace; they had no longer any hope but in the most determined resistance. The tocsin sounded from all the steeples, the *générale* beat in all the streets. Old men and women, age and childhood, were to be seen at the barricades, which were erected at the gates and across the principal entrances. The utmost enthusiasm and courage pervaded the working classes, who by this time had become all armed; the burghers, in silence, and trembling for their shops, fell into the ranks, obeying mechanically a movement which they had originally raised, but of which they had now entirely lost the direction. Some guns, placed at the gates of Schaarbeck and Louvain, opened a fire upon the troops of the Prince of Orange when they first came within range; but the Dutch guns were immediately hurried to the front, and by their superior fire quickly silenced that of the insurgents. The entrance being thus cleared, the troops advanced, and without much difficulty occupied the gates of Schaarbeck and Louvain, with the whole boulevards between them, and established themselves in force in the Park, the highest quarter of Brussels, and, in a military point of view, giving the entire command of the city.[1]

78. Prince Frederick attacks Brussels. Sept. 23.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 557, 559; Cap. iii. 79; Louis Blanc, ii. 106, 107.

But while these successes, to all appearance decisive, were gained by the royal troops, the insurgents in Brussels were not idle. Guided by the numerous French refugees then in the city, and who possessed the skill and information on military matters by which that gallant people are pre-eminently distinguished, they intrenched themselves strongly in the quarters adjacent to the park, and filled all the houses looking into it with musketeers. The Dutch troops might easily have forced the city to

79. The Dutch troops are in the end defeated, and retire to Antwerp.

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capitulate, by bombarding it from the park, which commanded it in every part; but the Prince of Orange was reluctant to proceed to such extremities with his own capital city, and with reason apprehended that it was a hopeless thing to attempt to conciliate a hostile kingdom by burning its metropolis. He confined himself, accordingly, to a combat of musketry, the effect of which would not reach beyond the combatants; and the entrance into the Place Royale from the park continued through the whole of the 24th to be the theatre of as warm a fire as ever was witnessed in street conflicts. The insurgents, however, bravely stood their ground, and notwithstanding the most vigorous efforts, the Dutch troops were unable to dislodge them from the houses commanding the entrances of the parks. During the night the insurgents received great reinforcements from Liege, Ghent, and other towns, which had espoused the same cause, and this so encouraged them that on the morning of the 25th they assumed the offensive, and commenced a vigorous attack on the Royalists in the park at all points. Success was for some time pretty nearly balanced; but reinforcements having come up in great numbers during the day, the insurgents, towards evening, gained decided advantages, dismounted a battery which the Dutch had established in front of the palace of the Prince of Orange, and forced the Dutch into the extremity of the Madeleine, where they succeeded in maintaining themselves. But as they were now evidently overmatched, and had a whole nation on their hands, the royal troops were withdrawn early in the morning of the 26th, and took the road to Antwerp. The revolutionary chiefs, amidst shouts of triumph, immediately appointed a provisional government, which forthwith pronounced the dethronement of Frederick-William from the Hôtel de Ville of Brussels, as Lafayette had done from the Hôtel de Ville of Paris.[1]

Sept. 25.

1 Moniteur, Oct. 1, 1830; Ann. Hist. xiii. 561, 568.

This decisive victory of an insurgent populace over a

considerable body of regular troops, armed with a powerful artillery, and headed by a prince of the blood, produced, as well it might, very great sensation in Europe, and stimulated the revolutionists everywhere to imitate the example of the Parisians and Belgians, and overturn the existing authorities by a well-concerted urban tumult. The whole provinces of Flanders followed the example of the capital, and declared for the provisional government and the separation from Holland. The Estates, by a majority of 55 to 43, decided for the separation; and ordered a national congress, where all interests should be represented. Meanwhile the fortresses, still remaining in the hands of the Dutch, being without ammunition or provisions, were all obliged to capitulate except Antwerp, Maestricht, and Luxembourg, which, with the province of Limburg, held out for the house of Nassau, and at the first of which the Prince of Orange had established a sort of counter-government, from which orders, as for the whole of Flanders, were issued. At length even Antwerp was wrested from them, with the exception of the citadel, which, with a garrison of seven thousand men, was held by a resolute veteran, GENERAL CHASSÉ. On the 27th October, the Prince of Orange left the town for the Hague, and he was no sooner gone than symptoms of insurrection appeared. Encouraged by a body of troops which approached from Brussels, and who were stealthily admitted within the gates, the people broke into revolt, surrounded and disarmed several isolated soldiers and detachments, and gradually wrested from the Dutch all the gates, while the garrison retired to the citadel. Emboldened by this success, the insurgents ventured to measure their strength with the citadel, and fired some shots at the sentinels on the ramparts. Chassé replied by a vigorous fire from two hundred pieces of artillery, which speedily set the town on fire in several places, and destroyed property to the amount of 5,000,000 florins (£400,000).[1] Menaced with total ruin, the insurgents were too happy

80. The insurrection extends generally, and the separation of Belgium and Holland is pronounced by the Chamber. Oct. 18.

Oct. 27.

Oct. 29.

[1] Moniteur, Nov. 1, 1830; Ann. Hist. xiii. 568, 574; Cap. iii. 80, 81.

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to accede to a convention, by which a suspension of hostilities was agreed to, on condition of the city remaining in their hands, and the citadel, arsenal, and squadron in those of General Chassé.

81. State of political feeling in Germany.

It was not to be expected that GERMANY, the land of ardent feelings, heroic courage, and lofty aspirations, as the tone of its contemporary literature and the deeds of its gallant sons demonstrate, was to escape the influence of the electric shock of the French Revolution. It was felt there, accordingly, and only with the more vehemence that the people were unaccustomed to the exercise of political rights, and that to them the land of freedom was the fairy region of imagination, not the theatre of actual experience or observation. The feelings of a large portion of the people had been deeply wounded by the failure on the part of the greater powers to perform the promises which, under the pressure of danger in the war of liberation, they had made to give representative institutions to their people. This theme, so vast and important, will form the subject of an ample disquisition in a future chapter, when Germany comes prominently forward, and the causes which led to the general outbreak of its inhabitants in 1848 require to be recounted. At present, as the disturbances which occurred were only partial, and of ephemeral duration, though not ephemeral consequences, it is sufficient to observe, that though representative institutions had been established in Wirtemberg, Baden, and several of the lesser states, subsequent to 1814, yet they were either wholly awanting, or existing only in form, in Austria and Prussia, and that a deep though smothered feeling of indignation pervaded the middle class over all Germany, at what they justly regarded as a deliberate breach of faith on the part of their governments in this vital particular. When men's minds were in this indignant and agitated state, a spark was sufficient to produce an explosion; and the French Revolution was too important an event not at once to induce it.

1830.

The train took fire first in the great commercial and manufacturing towns, the centres, in all ages and countries, of independent thought and united action. No sooner did the disturbances, accordingly, break out in Brussels, than they extended to Aix-la-Chapelle and Cologne, in both of which cities the workmen assembled in tumultuous crowds, and began to pillage shops, break machines, attack manufactories, and deliver prisoners from jail in order to swell the ranks of the disaffected. These disorders excited the utmost alarm all along the Rhine, in all the principal cities on which river symptoms of agitation appeared; and it was only by the general turning out and firm countenance of the burgher militia that they were prevented from breaking out into open insurrection. Greatly alarmed, the Prussian government in haste moved forward several veteran regiments of Old Prussia into the Rhenish provinces; and Prince William of Prussia, on September 9th, addressed a letter to the authorities there, expressing his resolution not to interfere with the internal affairs of France, or the form of its government, but to defend the Prussian dominions from attack, and maintain the provinces on the Rhine to the last extremity.[1] *

82. Disturbances in Aix-la-Chapelle and Cologne. Aug. 30.

[1] Cap. iii. 92, 93; Ann. Hist. xiii. 629, 630.

From the banks of the Rhine the agitation was communicated like an electric shock through all the cities of the north of Germany, though the success which attended the attempts at insurrection was very various, according to the vigilance and strength of the Government in different places, and the fidelity which the troops evinced when

83. Convulsions in all the north of Germany.

* "Le roi m'a chargé de témoigner à ses sujets des provinces Rhénanes combien il regrettait de ne pouvoir se rendre au milieu d'eux. Les évènemens survenus en France nécessitent sa présence dans sa capitale. Cependant le roi est fermement résolu *de ne s'immiscer en rien dans les affaires de ce pays*, et de laisser le volcan se consumer dans son intérieur. Mais si les Français attaquaient nos frontières, alors le roi rassemblerait toutes ses forces pour les combattre. Les travaux qui ont été exécutés à Coblentz et qui en font un boulevard puissant de la monarchie, prouvent l'importance que sa majesté attache à la possession des provinces Rhénanes, et sa ferme résolution de les défendre à toute extrémité.—GUILLAUME. Coblentz, 9 Septembre 1830."—*Ann. Hist.*, xiii. 93, note.

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brought into contact with the people. Enough, however, appeared to indicate what the events of 1848 so fully confirmed, that the stability of existing institutions in Germany rested entirely upon the strength and fidelity of the armed force; that in the midst of feudal manners, institutions, and traditions, though repressed by an enormous military establishment, there existed a deep and widespread spirit of discontent in the industrious and highly-educated middle classes; and that, if the time should come when the regular troops were no longer, as in France, to be relied on in a conflict with the people, or were openly to espouse the popular side, society would be shaken to its centre, and the most dreadful convulsions might be anticipated.[1]

[1] Cap. iii. 93, 95; Ann. Hist. xiii. 626, 629.

84. In Dresden, Leipsic, and Brunswick.

In all the cities where the Teutonic race was predominant, even the military capital of Bavaria, and the distant metropolis of Denmark, disturbances or symptoms of disorder appeared on intelligence being received of the events in Brussels; but they assumed the most formidable aspect in Leipsic, Dresden, Brunswick, and Hesse-Cassel. In the first of these cities, extensive mercantile transactions, a great spread of knowledge, and the vast concourse of strangers during the fair, had greatly strengthened the desire for popular institutions. In the second, in addition to the general desire for freedom, there was united the discontent of a population generally Protestant at a royal family still Catholic. In Leipsic, the disturbances, which

Sept. 7.

originated with the students of the university, were repressed without any serious consequences at the end of two days; but at Dresden the populace for a time gained the ascendant. The Hôtel de Ville and the Hôtel de la

Sept. 9.

Police were both burned, and the King was obliged to fly from his capital, and take refuge in the impregnable fortress of Königstein, so celebrated in the wars of Frederick the Great and Napoleon. At Hesse-Cassel—where the people, in addition to the other causes of German discontent, were irritated by the absence of the Elector, who

lived, apart from the Electress, a scandalous life at his palace of Wilhelmshohe, in which his presence was signalised only by arbitrary decrees or acts of oppression against his subjects—the disorders were not less serious, and were only put down by four thousand of the Burgher Guard and four hundred regular troops.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 634, 640; Cap. iii. 96.

85. And in Brunswick. Sept. 6.

Still more alarming were the disturbances in Brunswick. On the 6th the populace rose, and, disregarding sixteen pieces of cannon placed around the palace of the reigning sovereign, but which were never discharged, surrounded the ducal residence, which was soon committed to the flames. The whole pictures and furniture were broken to pieces, or thrown out of the windows, and the superb pile reduced to ashes. The Duke fled in disguise during the darkness of the night, and escaped to London, where he was coldly received by the English government, which was aware of the indiscretions and faults on his part which had occasioned so violent an explosion. Meanwhile, the Estates of the duchy conferred the government, provisionally, on his brother Prince William, in the character of regent, and as a matter of necessity he was recognised by the courts of London, Berlin, and Vienna. Even the distant capital of Vienna felt the shock. Assemblages were formed in the streets which defied the whole power of the police, and were dispersed only by the appearance of the cuirassiers; and the dawn of that spirit already appeared, destined at no distant period to threaten with dissolution the whole Austrian monarchy.[2]

[2] Ann. Hist. xiii. 631, 634, 637; Cap. iii. 96; Moniteur, Sept. 12, 1830.

86. Political contests in Switzerland.

SWITZERLAND did not escape the general contagion; and though the shepherds of the valleys, in possession of full democratic privileges, remained tranquil, the burghers of its cities, who were not equally endowed, were violently agitated. The Federal Diet was sitting at Berne in perfect tranquillity when the news arrived of the revolution of July in Paris; and the excitement immediately became so violent that it was evident the demand for more

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popular institutions could no longer be withstood. Wisely resolving to yield to a storm which they could not resist, the cantons in which aristocratic institutions still existed, themselves took the lead in making the changes which were demanded. Zurich was the first which did so. On the 27th November the local legislature of that city passed a resolution fixing the representation of the Council at 212 members, of whom a third were to be returned by the city, and two-thirds by the landward part of the canton, fixing the qualification for representatives at twenty-nine years of age, and a fortune of 5000 francs (£200). This Council was to appoint a smaller body, which was to form a constitution, the basis of which was to be popular sovereignty, and an equal division of the public burdens. Similar organic changes, in effect like the Reform Bill in England, amounting to revolution, were brought about in Lucerne, Soleure, Argovia, St Gall, and Turgovia, not without, in some, serious popular disorders which disgraced the land and cause of freedom. Berne itself, the most aristocratic of all the cantons, underwent its revolution. The petitions praying for reform and an extension of popular rights, presented to its Council of State, were so numerous that at length they could no longer be resisted, and in the beginning of December a meeting of the great Council, which consisted of 217 members, was held, at which it was unanimously resolved to put the whole militia of the country on a war footing, and to appoint a committee of eleven to revise the constitution. So great, however, was the public agitation, that these measures would not suffice, and the central committee of government accordingly convoked a general assembly of the representatives of all the cantons to meet at Berne on the 23d December. It decreed the levy of sixty thousand men, to cause the external independence of the confederation to be respected; but wisely abstained from interfering with the internal constitutions of the cantons, which were left to their separate legislatures.[1]

Nov. 27.

Dec. 23.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 674, 678.

ITALY also felt the shock, and from the more ardent temperament of its inhabitants, and the circumstance of their having so long been unaccustomed to the exercise of any of the rights of freemen, with more violence than in the colder latitudes of the Alps. In Lombardy and Piedmont the extreme vigilance of the police, and the presence of an immense Austrian force, the fidelity of which could perfectly be relied on, prevented any open convulsions; but the impression was not the less decided, and the public passions, long and rigorously repressed, only acquired the greater strength from being brooded over in silence. The fermentation was extreme in Bologna and Modena, the two cities of the peninsula most warmly attached to the new institutions; but it was repressed with rigour, and in Florence overawed by the influence of Austria. In Rome the effect was very great at first, but it was ere long superseded by the election of a new Pope, in consequence of the death of Pius VIII., which took place on the 30th November. He was succeeded by Cardinal Capellari, elected to the pontifical chair on February 2d, who took the title of Gregory XVI.[1]

87. Convulsions in Italy.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 684, 688.

But these events, important and startling as they were, yielded in ultimate importance to an event which took place in this year in Spain, and proved the source of unnumbered calamities to both the kingdoms of the Peninsula. This was the CHANGE IN THE ORDER OF SUCCESSION to the Spanish crown, as it had now been established for a hundred and twenty years, with the concurrence of all the powers of Europe. This order, which strictly excluded females from the crown, was an innovation on the old law of Spain, which admitted them; but it had been established by a decree or pragmatic sanction on 10th September 1713, on occasion of the accession of Philip V. to the throne, and subsequently ratified by all the powers of Europe, and in particular by France and England, by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1714. It had ever since regulated the succession to the Spanish crown, and was regarded as

88. Change in the order of succession in Spain.

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a fundamental point in the public law and fixed policy of Europe. The object of it was not so much any peculiar necessity for the male succession in the Spanish monarchy beyond other states, but considerations of the highest moment for the general balance of power. The bequest of the crown of "Spain and the Indies" to the Duke of Anjou, grandson of Louis XIV., in 1700, by the King of Spain, had lighted up the flames of the War of the Succession in Europe, which burnt fiercely for thirteen years, and were very imperfectly laid by the Peace of Utrecht in 1714. This treaty was thought by the Tories to have averted the danger of a union of the crowns of France and Spain on the same head, by entailing the crown of the latter kingdom on the male line. Bolingbroke and Harley, who made that treaty, did not perceive, what the event ere long demonstrated, that it was not the union of the *crowns*, but the alliance of the *kingdoms*, which was the real object of danger; that a "family compact" founded on family connection might prove as formidable as a union of kingdoms; and that, if the English fleets were outnumbered, and blockaded in their harbours, as they often were in the course of the century, by those of France and Spain together, it were of little moment whether it was in virtue of a united government or a family alliance.[1] *

[1] See Life of Marlborough, c. xii. p. 474, 524.

89. Its motives and political objects.

An opportunity now occurred which enabled the Liberals of Spain to lay the foundation for a revival of their hopes, which had been so signally blasted by the universal burst of indignation against their rule that appeared on the invasion of the Duke d'Angoulême in

* In every one of the wars of England against France, in the course of the eighteenth century, subsequent to 1714, the Spanish government took part with the French, and their united navies always considerably outnumbered the English. This was particularly the case in the American War and the war of the Revolution, in the former of which the French and Spanish fleets, numbering forty-seven sail of the line, blockaded the English, of twenty-one sail, in Plymouth; while, at the outset of the latter, their combined fleets outnumbered those of Great Britain by forty-four line-of-battle ships.—See ALISON'S *Life of Marlborough*, vol. ii. p. 474, 3d edit.

1823. The King, now advanced in years, had married in the close of the preceding year CHRISTINA, daughter of the King of the Two Sicilies; and the fêtes consequent on the marriage, which was graced by the presence of the royal parents of the bride, had been of so magnificent a character as to have recalled the pristine days of the monarchy, and in some degree reconciled even the Liberals to the sway of "*El Rey Assoluto.*" In the spring of this year the Queen was discovered to be with child; and as the sex of the infant was of course uncertain, and DON CARLOS, the King's immediate younger brother, was, failing male issue of the marriage, the heir-apparent of the monarchy, and the avowed head of the despotic party, the Liberals resolved upon a device, which was attended with entire success, for altering the order of the succession, and establishing it in favour of the King's issue, *whether male or female.* By this means they hoped to ingraft a war of succession on a war of principles, and gain for themselves an ostensible and visible head,—a matter of importance in all civil wars, but especially in one in Spain, where the people were much more inclined to attach themselves to persons than to things.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 688, 690.

By the united influence of the young Queen and the old father-confessor, the King was won over in his old age to this intrigue, and the decree accordingly appeared calling females as well as males to the succession of the throne. To render the device the more plausible, it was stated in the decree that it was no new order of succession which was thereby established, but that it was a mere transcript of a former decree made by the late king, Charles IV., in 1789, on the requisition of the Cortes. Neither the alleged old decree, however, nor the requisition of the Cortes, were ever produced to give authority to the innovation, and it was done without the privity or concurrence of any of the powers in Europe which had been parties to the Treaty of Utrecht, by which the

90. Promulgation of the decree. March 29, 1830.

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crown had been entailed on the male line. This, however, soon came to be of little moment; for in due time the Queen gave birth to a daughter, ISABELLA, the present sovereign of Spain; and although the irregularities of the mother's conduct gave rise to serious doubts as to the infant's legitimacy, yet she was immediately adopted as the head of the Liberals, and the dependants of the Crown united with the partisans of free institutions in making THE QUEEN the war-cry of their united party. It will appear in the sequel what important consequences followed this circumstance, what mournful tragedies it occasioned in all parts of the Peninsula, and how completely, in the end, it has had the effect of nullifying Spain in the general balance of power in Europe.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 690, 691.

91. Resumé of the influence of the Revolution in France over Europe.

Thus, within less than six months after the Revolution of 1830 broke out, and Charles X. had been dethroned, was the whole face of affairs in Europe changed. Distrust had everywhere succeeded to confidence, apprehension to security, convulsion to stability. In vain had Louis Philippe assured the Continental sovereigns, and with sincerity, that he was inclined to abide by existing treaties, to check the spirit of revolution, to stand between them and the plague. Events had proved that, whatever his intentions were, his power to carry them into effect was extremely circumscribed. It was evident that there were two governments in Paris, one in the Tuileries and one in the clubs, and that the latter was more powerful for evil than the former was for good. The spirit of propagandism, nursed in France, and quadrupled in strength by its victory there, was now spreading over the adjoining states, and had already achieved the most signal triumphs in foreign nations. The Conservative administration had been overturned in England, and a party installed in power, based on popular support, and pledged to organic changes, with a democratic tendency in the constitution; the Kingdom of the Netherlands had been revolutionised, the King dethroned at Brussels, and

Belgium to all appearance irrevocably severed from Holland; the barrier of Europe against France had been converted into the outwork of France against Europe; Germany had been convulsed, and a reigning sovereign dethroned; Switzerland subjected to democratic change, and brought under the influence of the clubs in Paris; and in Spain the order of succession changed, and a visible head given to the democratic party in the Peninsula, in the person of the heiress to the throne! A conflict of three days' duration in the streets of Paris had obliterated the whole effect of the victories of Marlborough and Wellington, overturned the barrier in Flanders to revolutionary power, and annihilated in Spain the last remnant of security against French influence becoming predominant in the Peninsula! To all appearance the prophecy of Lafayette, forty years before, was about to be realised; the tricolor flag was to make the tour of the globe.

# CHAPTER XXV.

## FRANCE FROM THE OVERTHROW OF THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS IN OCTOBER 1830, TO THE ABOLITION OF THE HEREDITARY PEERAGE IN SEPTEMBER 1831.

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1. Change in the attitude of France in reference to the Continental powers.

THE events which have been recounted in the end of the last chapter entirely altered the position of France and Louis Philippe with reference to the European powers, and had an important effect, both externally and internally, on its future history. The Government of July was now placed in a state of antagonism with Europe. The cordial feelings with which the envoys of Louis Philippe had been received by the northern powers on his first accession to the throne, as a fortunate necessity and valuable barrier against evil, had given place to an alarming anxiety and entire distrust. Without doubting the sincerity of his professions of an ardent desire to coerce revolution and restrain propagandism, they had seen enough to have the most serious apprehensions of his ability to do either the one or the other. The English government evinced, not without reason, great disquietude at the events in Flanders, and the extension of revolutionary influence to the mouth of the Scheldt. The speech from the throne at the opening of Parliament openly expressed that feeling.[1] The Prussian cabinet was equally alarmed at the revolutionary movements in Northern Germany, and the obvious danger to which their Rhenish provinces were exposed, from the vicinity

[1] Ante, c. xxii. § 71.

of the Flemish states in which the government had been overthrown. The cabinet of Vienna, under the cautious guidance of Prince Metternich, was still more apprehensive at the democratic fervour in Switzerland and the excitement in Northern Italy, which their huge army and vigilant police had the utmost difficulty in repressing. Even the distant court of St Petersburg took the alarm, and, well aware of the sympathy of feeling between Paris and Warsaw, began to direct forces, to be prepared for any event, in great numbers, to the banks of the Vistula. The Prussians sent troops as rapidly as possible to their Rhenish provinces, and Austria did the same to Northern Italy. Everywhere on the Continent were to be seen armaments and heard the sound of marching men. England alone, secure in her sea-girt isle, and entirely engrossed with domestic questions, made no warlike preparations, and regarded the distant din on the Continent as the precursor of a conflict with which she had no immediate concern.[1]

[1] Cap. iii. 275, 279.

2. Cabinet divisions, and fall of the Ministry.

This great change of necessity induced a corresponding alteration in the French cabinet. The original government, formed by a coalition of the three parties—the Doctrinaires, headed by the Duke de Broglie and M. Guizot; the burgher interest, by Count Molé and M. Casimir Périer; and the Republicans, represented by M. Dupont de l'Eure—soon underwent the fate of all administrations formed by a combination of interests, not a union of principles. Dissensions of the most violent kind speedily appeared; the debates and recriminations were as tumultuous at the council-board as at the tribune; and it soon became evident that the differences of opinion were so great that everything like united action was impossible. In truth, each of these sections of the Cabinet was the representative of a party in the State, the passions or apprehensions of which had become so violent that they could no longer be restrained. The Republicans in the clubs, the press, and the streets, loudly proclaimed the

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necessity of instantly establishing the sovereignty of the people, installing the citizens in possession of real power by a great reduction of the suffrage qualification, receiving with open arms the friends of freedom in other countries, and regaining the frontier of the Rhine, and all that had been lost by the treaty of Vienna, by accepting the proffered amalgamation of Belgium with France. The burghers, whose strength, always great, had been doubled by their forming the greater proportion of the National Guard, both in the metropolis and the provincial towns, were mainly set on the maintenance of order and the preservation of general peace, and dreaded alike any foreign demonstration which might revive the hostile alliance of 1815, and any domestic innovation which might restore the internal sway of the Jacobins in the State. And the Doctrinaires, to whose enlarged and philosophic ideas the sagacious and experienced mind of the sovereign was most inclined, earnestly inculcated the principles that the government, to be stable, must be one of progress and of order; that measures must be taken to coerce the extravagance and restrain the influence of the clubs; and that the only lasting security for internal freedom was to be found in the maintenance of external peace.[1]

[1] Cap. iii. 336, 341; Louis Blanc, ii. 157, 159.

3. Commencement of the trial of the late Ministers.

With such discordant opinions agitating both the Cabinet, the Chamber, and the people, it was impossible that the Government could long hold together; but an event which strongly roused and agitated the nation, induced its dissolution even earlier than might have been anticipated. This was the trial of Prince Polignac and the other ministers of Charles X., who, by the officious zeal of inferior functionaries rather than the real wishes of the Government, had been arrested in various places and brought to Vincennes, where they awaited the determination of the cabinet and legislature on their fate. Had it been practicable, Louis Philippe and the majority of his cabinet would gladly have avoided so embarrassing

a proceeding as the trial of these state prisoners; but their alleged delinquence and real infraction of the laws had been too recent, the passions of the people too strongly excited, the risk of anything like a compromise to the new Government too great, to admit of such a course being thought of. Reluctantly, therefore, they were compelled to authorise the institution of proceedings against them. On September 23d the Chamber of Deputies, after long debates on the form to be adopted in the prosecution, had invested three commissioners with the power of conducting it on the part of the popular branch of the legislature, and the trial was to take place before the Chamber of Peers. That body forthwith held an extraordinary meeting to commence the cognisance of the affair; and according to the form of the French law, when the court takes so large a share in the preliminary steps of the trial, three peers were appointed, and conjoined with the commissioners of the Deputies to conduct it. The judicial examinations commenced, and were conducted with great strictness and ability, though in an equitable spirit, by the government commissioners; and the result was communicated to the Chamber of Peers in a detailed and very impartial report on the 29th November.[1]

Sept. 23.

Oct. 4.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 325, 359, 423; Louis Blanc, ii. 119, 120, 121.

4. Conduct of the accused before the trial.

The conduct of the accused during the prolonged interrogations was calm and dignified, but at the same time strongly characterised by that political infatuation and insensibility to the realities of their situation by which their conduct when in power had been distinguished. When they approached the gloomy towers of Vincennes, there was enough to quell the most undaunted spirit. In its fosse the Duke d'Enghien had fallen a victim to the jealousy and anger of Napoleon; within its walls Prince Polignac had undergone the weary hours of a nine years' captivity, for having conspired against that sovereign power which he was now accused of having abused. The carriage which bore them to the gloomy fortress was

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surrounded by an immense crowd, which never ceased to exclaim, "*La mort, la mort! la mort aux Ministres!*" So savage was their demeanour, so fierce and unrelenting their cries for vengeance, that the prisoners were relieved, and felt as if the worst of their dangers were over, when the drawbridge was passed, the gates entered, and the doors of the fortress closed upon their pursuers. During the examinations, the prisoners, who were kept apart and in close confinement, exhibited a very different demeanour. M. de Chantelauze, on seeing the commissioners, with some of whom he had formerly been intimate, enter his apartment, burst into tears; M. de Peyronnet evinced more resolution, admitted his accession to the ordinances, and justified them by the necessities of his situation, and the kindness of the king towards him. M. Guernon de Ranville was equally resolute. But although the pale countenance, prominent forehead, and emaciated figure of Prince Polignac evinced the wearing influence of anxiety and meditation, yet the smile on his lips and the serenity of his manner revealed a mind at ease with itself and the world. He constantly believed that the acknowledged irresponsibility of the King must, by a legal fiction, be extended to his Ministers. "When am I to be set at liberty?" he often said to the commissioners.[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, ii. 120, 121; Cap. iii. 388, 389; Ann. Hist. xiii. 425, 428.

5. Disturbed state of Paris before this.

During the progress of these examinations, however, the state of Paris became such as dreadfully alarmed the court, and fearfully endangered the accused. The Republicans were indefatigable in their endeavours to excite the people, and awaken the savage thirst for blood which had for ever disgraced France during the Reign of Terror. The continued and increasing distress which existed among the working classes, and which the agitators contrived to impute solely to the acts of the late ministers, which originated the convulsion, added immensely to the success with which their efforts were attended. On the 18th October, in particular, an *emeute*

Oct. 18.

of so serious a kind took place in the Faubourg St Antoine, that it assumed almost the character of an insurrection. A furious band then surrounded Vincennes, and were making preparations for storming the castle, in order to execute justice on the state prisoners with their own hands. They were only repelled by General Daumenil, the governor, threatening, if they did not desist, to blow up the building. Repulsed from thence, the waves of insurrection rolled to the westward, and broke on the Palais Royal, where it was only averted by the firm countenance of the National Guard. The King and his Ministers were all assembled. "Hark!" said Odillon Barrot, "I hear the cry, 'Vive Barrot!'" "And I," said the King, have heard the cry 'Vive Petion!'" Groups of disorderly persons singing the Marseillaise, and exclaiming "*Mort aux Ministres!*" crowded the streets leading to Vincennes, and in the evening they were generally swelled to several thousand persons. The apprehensions of the Government were extreme: it was thus that the massacres in the prisons on 2d September 1792 had commenced. The garrison of Vincennes was greatly strengthened, the guards doubled, the drawbridge kept up, and the guns loaded, as in a state of siege, with grape-shot. Thanks to these wise precautions, the revolutionists were deterred from an attack upon the fortress, and the agitators confined themselves to incessant efforts at the clubs and in the press to excite the public mind, and keep it in that state of feverish anxiety when the most desperate resolutions are most likely to meet with a favourable reception.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 429, 430; Cap. iii. 392, 394; Louis Blanc, ii. 120, 128.

6. Commencement of the trial. Dec. 15.

At length, on the 15th of December, the trial commenced in the hall of the Peers, in the palace of the Luxembourg. Everything had been done which could give dignity and solemnity to the august spectacle. Seats were provided for all the foreign ambassadors and their families, as well as the principal dignitaries of the king-

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dom; and a guard of two thousand men, with several guns, was provided for daily service around the hall, besides powerful reserves in all the barracks of the capital, ready to turn out at a moment's notice. No less than one hundred and sixty-three of the Peers answered to their names when the roll was called; twenty sent excuses, which were sustained. The proceedings opened with the utmost solemnity, and were marked by a degree of moderation and equity which reflected honour on the august assembly, and contrasted strangely with the perpetual cry of "*La mort, la mort! la mort aux Ministres!*" which burst from the agitated crowds that surrounded the palace. The defence of Ministers rested mainly on the necessity of their situation, as the Government had been brought to a dead lock by the majority of 221 in the Chamber of Deputies, and on the 14th article of the charter, which, for such extreme cases, had, it was contended, provided the appropriate remedy. All the accused behaved with firmness, and yet temperance of demeanour. The smile often appeared on Prince Polignac's lips which had so frequently been seen during the whole course of these stormy scenes. Being asked who drew up the report which preceded the issuing of the ordinances, M. de Chantelauze replied, "It was I; it was drawn up after the principles of the ordinances had been agreed on by the Cabinet; it was a manifesto intended to be published, demanded by the King, and approved by the Council." The courage of this answer, when a capital charge was hanging over the accused, and vociferous crowds on the outside demanded their death, excited a general and involuntary feeling of respect.[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, ii. 397, 461; Cap. iii. 489, 492; Ann. Hist. xiii. 431, 440.

7. Dissolution of the Administration.

Louis Philippe, greatly to his honour, had from the very first exerted himself to the very utmost to save the lives of the accused. More than this could not, in the excited state of the public mind, by possibility be hoped for. His conduct in this respect was the more praiseworthy, that it was attended with imminent hazard to his own crown,

and even life; for such was the excitement in Paris on the subject of the trial, that it was hard to say whether the Sovereign or the prisoners stood in the greater peril. As it was, the crisis proved fatal, not to the monarchy, but to the administration. The immediate and ostensible occasion of its fall was a split in the Cabinet, on the subject of dismissing M. Odillon Barrot, the Prefect of the Seine, from his office, on occasion of a proclamation he had issued, condemning the address of the Chamber of Deputies, which had appeared in the official part of the *Moniteur*, as "an inopportune step, calculated to interrupt the ordinary course of justice." This gave rise to a violent altercation in the Cabinet between the King and M. Dupont de l'Eure, who was supported by M. de Lafayette and the whole strength of the republican party; the former contending for the dismissal, the latter resisting it. It was easy to see, from the warmth with which the dispute was conducted on both sides, that a more vital interest than a mere question of criminal law was at stake, and that the real point was, whether or not the lives of the state prisoners were to be saved.* The Keeper of the Seals, M. Dupont de l'Eure, tendered his resignation if M. Odillon Barrot was dismissed. The King, alarmed at the prospect of an entire breach with the republican party, consented to retain him; and the consequence was, that MM. de Broglie, Guizot, Molé, Casimir Périer, Dupin, and Bignon, tendered their resignations, which were accepted.[1]

Nov. 9.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 363, 365; Louis Blanc, ii. 151, 153; Cap. iii. 343, 345.

* "Louis Philippe annonce que la retraite du Préfet de la Seine est décidée, et que M. de Lafayette y consent. 'M. de Lafayette, Sire!' dit alors M. Dupont de l'Eure, 'votre Majesté se trompe assurément.' 'Je l'ai entendu, Monsieur.' Permettez-moi de croire à une erreur de votre part: M. de Lafayette m'a tenu un langage différent, et je ne crois pas le Général capable de le contredire à ce point.' Le visage du roi était en feu. 'Au reste,' continue le Garde des Sceaux (Dupont), 'reparlons de ce qui me concerne. Puisque M. Odillon de Barrot se retire, je réitère à votre Majesté la prière d'accepter ma démission.' 'Mais, vous m'avez dit ce matin tout le contraire.' 'Moi, Sire! J'affirme cette fois que vous êtes dans l'erreur.' '*Quoi, Monsieur! vous me donnez un démenti?* Tout le monde saura que vous m'avez manqué.' 'Sire!' répondit M. Dupont avec dignité, 'quand le roi aura dit *oui*, et M. Dupont, *non*, je ne sais auquel des deux la France croira.'"—LOUIS BLANC, vol. ii. p. 152.

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8. Formation of M. Lafitte's ministry. Oct. 29.

To all appearance the triumph of the Republicans was now complete, for they had succeeded in humbling the King, and driving the Doctrinaires and Conservatives of the Cabinet out of office, on a question in which they themselves were clearly in the wrong,—viz. in supporting a subordinate functionary, *still holding office*, in a public act of insubordination against the Government. But with that dexterity which the King possessed in so remarkable a degree, and of which, in the course of his reign, he gave so many proofs, he contrived to elude the blow, and escape total defeat, by making a new combination, and taking his Cabinet, not from the victorious Republicans, but from the burgher party, which had not yet been brought into discredit. The Duke de Broglie retired from the dignified post of President of the Council; M. Guizot from the scarcely less important position of Minister of the Interior: M. Lafitte was made President of the Council and Minister of Finance; Marshal Maison, Minister of Foreign Affairs; M. Montalivet, Minister of the Interior; M. Merilhou, Minister of Public Instruction; while M. Dupont de l'Eure, Count Sébastiani, and Marshal Gérard retained their offices respectively of Ministers of Justice, the Marine, and War. These seven alone constituted the Cabinet, from which M. Dupin and M. Bignon were excluded. The defeat of the Doctrinaires was complete, for they were entirely extruded from the Government; and the step in favour of the democratic party was considerable, for a banker, the author of the Revolution of July, was Premier, and the aristocratic party were almost entirely excluded from the Cabinet. A few days after, an ordinance appeared, appointing Count Sébastiani Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Argout Minister of the Marine, and Marshal Soult Minister at War, in room of Marshal Gérard.[1] The triumph of the extreme democrats, however, was not complete, for the burgher party, of which Lafitte was the head, still formed the majority of the Council; and

Nov. 17.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 366, 369; Louis Blanc, ii. 136, 140; Cap. iii. 136, 141.

it turned out, ere long, that Marshal Soult, the new War Minister, was the most formidable antagonist which the Republicans had ever encountered, and very different from Prince Polignac or the priests who had induced the Revolution of July.

9. M. Lafitte's statement of the principles of his ministry. Nov. 10.

The contest of parties began in the Chamber the very first day that the new Ministers appeared in their places there. M. Lafitte on this occasion made the following statement of the principles on which his Ministry was to be conducted: "A member of the former and present Administration, it falls to me to explain our intentions and proposed line of conduct, and the explanation shall be as concise as possible. The whole Council were unanimously of opinion that liberty could only be accompanied with order, and that the inflexible execution of the laws, till they are changed by legislative authority, is indispensable, under pain of anarchy. All are full of the hopes which the Revolution of 1789 has bequeathed to the world. Every one knows that the Revolution of 1830 must be restrained within certain bounds, that it is necessary to conciliate Europe by uniting to dignity a measured moderation. Upon these points we were all agreed, because the Cabinet was composed only of men of sense and prudence. But a difference arose upon the way in which we were to carry out the Revolution of 1830. The opinion was not general that it was destined soon to degenerate into anarchy; that it was necessary early to take measures of precaution against it; to evince distrust and hostility towards it. But, excepting upon this one point, there was no difference of opinion among the members of the late Cabinet." This declaration was perfectly sincere, and very near the truth; but it excited very little attention, as being couched only in vague generalities, which meant nothing. One only point of real practical importance occupied every mind, and divided society with the utmost acrimony.[1] The Legitimists and

[1] Moniteur, Nov. 11, 1830; Louis Blanc, ii. 141, 142.

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Doctrinaires were animated with the generous desire to save the lives of the ex-ministers; the Democrats and Republicans thirsted after their blood.

10. Progress of the trial of the ex-ministers.

The progress of the trial ere long brought them into violent collision, under circumstances so alarming as to threaten the destruction of the infant monarchy. The public, violently excited, suffering under most serious real evils, and incessantly stimulated by a licentious press, demanded in a voice of thunder a holocaust of victims to appease its indignation. The trial lasted long, and the public excitement seemed to increase with every day that it continued. The accused were defended with talent and energy; and some noble minds came forward, in the moment of peril, to defend their former political opponents at the hazard of their own lives. Among the rest was M. de Martignac, whose ministry had been supplanted by that of Prince Polignac, but who now appeared as counsel for M. de Peyronnet, his old school and college companion. "At school," said he, "at college, we have followed the same cause. Well, after having passed the ordeal of human grandeur, we find ourselves again here; I, as of old, lending to an accused party the aid of my voice; he, a captive accused, obliged to defend his life and good name, alike menaced. That long brotherhood, which had continued undisturbed through so many events, was interrupted for a moment by the sad effects of political dissension. The hall in which we are met has sometimes resounded with our debates, not unmingled with bitterness; but of all recollections, that of ancient friendship is alone retained in the castle of Vincennes.[1]"

[1] Louis Blanc, ii. 196, 197; Ann. Hist. xiii. 443, 445.

11. Arguments of M. Sauzet for the accused.

The general argument in favour of the accused was thus ably stated by M. Sauzet, who appeared for M. de Chantelauze: "The royal dynasty was in danger at the time of the ordinances, not in consequence of a general conspiracy, which I will not impute to the French nation. It is not I who will accuse the people of being treacherous to their King; but had not other and irretrievable

causes of discord arisen at that time in society? Who can doubt the dangers of the crown in presence of a new throne, when there were floating on all sides the standards of another house, and the colours of another epoch? The Revolution of July has furnished the best argument in favour of the ordinances, and of the necessity, in the eyes of Charles X., I will not say of what was actually done, but of some extraordinary measure to meet extraordinary dangers, to which the dynasty, in order to preserve its existence, was forced to have recourse. Let us figure to our minds what would have occurred if such a revolution as we have witnessed had broken out, prepared, not by conspiracy, but by the ancient and ineradicable bent of the public mind. We constantly confound the cause and the occasion. Three days have sufficed, indeed, to make the Revolution, but fifteen years had been employed in preparing it; and if I do not deceive myself by confining the Revolution within trifling limits, *it is not destined to have a long futurity.* It was a revolution which is due only to hazard, and which has only succeeded by a fortunate accident in breaking up the throne of our ancient kings; a revolution which probably would not have taken place the day before, and assuredly would not have been successful the day after."[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 451, 452.

12. Condemnation and punishment of the accused.

These, however, were political considerations, calculated perhaps to go far in justifying the memory of the accused in the eyes of posterity, for having introduced the ordinances as a measure of state necessity; but they afforded no vindication of them, in a legal point of view, from the crime of a deliberate infraction of the constitution, of which they were accused. Their condemnation, therefore, was a matter of necessity; and it is highly to the credit of the Government that they had the courage to propose, and of the Peers that they had the firmness to adopt, punishments short of death. So much had their number been reduced by the exclusion, at the Revolution, of all those who had been elevated to the peerage

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during the reign of Charles X., that only 156 peers appeared to vote on the guilt and punishment of the accused. They were all found guilty by a majority of 132 to 24. This was expected, and was, in fact, unavoidable; but the material point, upon which public expectation was so violently excited, was, what punishment should be inflicted on them? The whole weight of Government had been thrown, and happily with success, to the side of mercy. M. de Polignac was sentenced, by a majority of 128, to transportation for life; M. de Peyronnet, by 87 to 68, to perpetual imprisonment; M. de Chantelauze, by 138 to 14, to perpetual imprisonment; and M. de Guernon Ranville to the same punishment, by 140 to 16. Considering how violently the people were excited on the subject, and the efforts which had been made to rouse them, these sentences must be regarded as an act of mercy; and it must always be considered as an honour to the government of Louis Philippe that it first gave the example, on a memorable occasion, of the abolition of the punishment of death for purely political offences.[1]

Dec. 21.

[1] Moniteur, Dec. 22, 1830; Ann. Hist. xiii. 455, 456.

13. The accused are safely conveyed to Vincennes, and thence to Ham.

But though the lives of the accused were spared by the court, it was by no means equally clear they would be respected by the people; and the utmost danger awaited them in the course of the passage from the palace of the Luxembourg to the castle of Vincennes. The mob which surrounded the court amounted to above fifty thousand persons, and exhibited the most savage and unrelenting disposition. Had they once tasted of blood, the whole horrors of the first Revolution might have been renewed. Happily, in this crisis, the admirable dispositions of the military and police authorities prevented such a catastrophe. Twenty-four thousand troops of the line and national guards, with cannons loaded and matches lighted, were formed in dense array around the building when the sentence was determined on; and without its being promulgated, the prisoners were hurried away, the moment

it was signed by the president of the court, to the carriages which were to convey them to Vincennes, which immediately set off at a rapid pace. M. Montalivet, the Minister of the Interior, rode on the right of the carriage which conveyed Prince Polignac—the post of honour as the post of danger. So quickly was the whole got over that they were safely lodged at Vincennes, under the charge of the firm General Daumenil, before the mob around the Luxembourg were well aware of their conviction.* The sentences were then read to them in their separate apartments, which they heard with constancy; and some days afterwards they were quietly removed to Ham, the place of their final destination. Some disturbances took place in Paris, which was violently agitated on that and the following day; but they were suppressed by the firm countenance of the troops of the line and national guards, who were publicly thanked by Louis Philippe for their conduct on the occasion.[1]

[1] Moniteur, Dec. 24, 1830; Louis Blanc, ii. 223; Ann. Hist. xiii. 456, 459; Cap. iv. 163.

14. Disaffection of the National Guard, and the misery of the capital.

The violent excitement consequent on the trial of the ex-ministers led Government to appreciate the necessity of doing something decisive to terminate the anarchy which prevailed in the capital, and put a period to the military dictatorship which, as Commander-in-chief of the National Guard, M. de Lafayette exercised in the capital. Great part of the National Guard had evinced a very bad spirit on occasion of the trial, and the artillery, in particular, had been so mutinous that a conflict had all but taken place between the gunners of the National Guard and the troops of the line, in the Place de Carrousel, under the very eyes of the King. On the 22d December, when the decision of the Peers on the punishment of the accused was known in the capital, things wore the most menacing aspect. A black flag was dis-

* When they passed the Barrier du Trône, M. Montalivet wrote to the King: "Sire, nous avons franchi la moitié de l'espace; encore quelque minutes de danger et nous sommes à Vincennes et tout est sauvé."—CAPEFIGUE, vol. iv. p. 163.

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played from the Pantheon; crowds began to assemble in the streets, muttering threats, no longer against the ex-ministers, but the Government which had shielded them. So great was the distress which prevailed among the workmen of the metropolis, that crowds of ten or twelve thousand persons were seen in all directions, loudly demanding bread or employment, and openly threatening insurrection if it were any longer withheld. Against them, and alongside of the best portion of the National Guard, appeared the scholars of the Polytechnic School, clad in that magic uniform which five months before had thrilled every heart with emotion. Indeed, the peril to the new dynasty was as great as that which had overturned the last; and it was the bitter lessons learned by experience which alone in this crisis preserved Paris from a second convulsion. The shopkeepers had suffered so dreadfully by the stagnation of trade induced by the first, that they were resolved not again to incur a similar risk; and to all the dreams of the enthusiasts it was a sufficient answer, "*Le commerce ne va pas.*" Beyond all doubt, it was the steadiness of the National Guard from the best parts of the city which at this crisis saved the throne.[1]

[1] Cap. iv. 167, 169; Louis Blanc, ii. 224, 226; Moniteur, Dec. 23, 1830.

13. Demands of Lafayette.

But this very circumstance of the immense importance of the service rendered by the National Guard on this occasion opened the eyes of the Government to the extreme danger of their position in regard to that formidable body. M. de Lafayette, taking advantage of his influence, and of the almost unbounded sway which these circumstances gave him, made certain demands on the Government which were tantamount to a revolution. These were—1st, The immediate dissolution of the Chamber of Deputies, the majority of which was not in harmony with the ideas of the Republicans, with whom he was surrounded; 2d, The placing of the electoral franchise on a new footing, which should admit all the persons paying direct taxes to the suffrage; 3d, The reconstruction of the peerage on a different basis, for life only,

and elective, like the American Senate. Thus the dictator, the head of the National, which might now be called the Prætorian Guard, demanded what in France, where there were 4,000,000 persons paying direct taxes, was equivalent to universal suffrage, and the abolition of the peerage, whether hereditary or for life, and the substitution of an elective senate in its room. This was certainly the realisation of his favourite dream of a "monarchy surrounded with republican institutions." Whether they could coexist in the same community was a very different question, upon which the Government required to come to an immediate decision. The sway of Lafayette, as at the head of the armed force of the capital, appeared in foreign countries completely to overshadow the throne, and the utmost alarm was manifested regarding it, not in the journals of St Petersburg and Vienna, but in the Whig papers of London.[1]

[1] Cap. iv. 170, 171; Louis Blanc, ii. 228, 229; Ann. Hist. xiii. 483, 484.

*The conduct of the French government on this crisis was* marked by the vigour and decision which, in civil dissensions, when supported by strength, is the sure precursor of success. Already the exorbitant power assumed by M. de Lafayette had excited a general jealousy even among his own adherents, who, although quite willing to use him for a tool, were by no means inclined to have him for a master. The press, both Republican and Legitimist, daily declaimed against him; and the epithet of "Le Polignac populaire," applied to him by M. Capefigue in the *Conservateur*, like other felicitous sobriquets which wound those of whom we are jealous, was received with general applause. Encouraged by this support, Ministers, on the 24th December, amidst the most fulsome expressions of gratitude and adulation for the "hero of the two worlds," quietly deprived him of his command of the National Guards, cloaking the dismissal under the pretext of appointing him "Honorary Commander of the Guard." "Since the 30th July," said M. Charles Dupin on the part of the Government, "General Lafayette has been the living law of the National Guard; he has acquired unbounded

16. Dismissal of M. de Lafayette from the command of the National Guard. Dec. 24.

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glory by the manner in which he has exercised that august mission; but the friend, the companion, the emulator of Washington, knows that a man cannot remain a living law all his life, if the written law is not to become extinct. That illustrious friend of liberty, if he were within these walls, would be the first to say, 'My wish is that the law should live, and that I should again become what I am, the citizen of the two worlds.'" The decree dismissing Lafayette with these high-sounding flowers of panegyric was passed by the Chambers without a division; and the General had the patriotism or the good sense to submit to it without resistance, after declining the title of "honorary" commander offered to him, with the most flattering expressions of regard, by the King.[1] *

[1] Moniteur, Dec. 22, 1830; Ann. Hist. xiii. 486, 489; Cap. iv. 177, 179; Louis Blanc, ii. 228, 229.

17. Changes in the Cabinet.

This decisive step was immediately followed by some changes in the Cabinet. M. Dupont de l'Eure resigned his situation as Minister of Justice; it was gladly accepted, and he was succeeded by M. Merilhou, then Minister of Public Instruction, a man of ability and of moderation, though a decided Liberal. M. Merilhou was succeeded in the portfolio of Public Instruction by M. Barthe, a man of eloquence and power, and, like him, distinguished as a Liberal under the Government of the Restoration. M. Treilhard, the Prefect of Police, also resigned, and was succeeded by M. Baudé, one of the most active chiefs on

* "Le grand pouvoir," said Lafayette, "dont j'étais investi, donnait quelque ombrage. Vous en aviez bien entendu parler, Messieurs. Cet ombrage s'était surtout étendu dans les cercles diplomatiques. Aujourd'hui, ce pouvoir est brisé, je n'ai plus que l'honneur d'être entre des collégues. Cette démission, reçue par le roi avec les témoignages de sa bonté ordinaire pour moi, je ne l'aurais pas donnée avant la crise que nous venons de traverser. Aujourd'hui, ma conscience de l'ordre publique est pleinement satisfaite. *J'avoue qu'il n'en est* pas de même de ma conscience de liberté. Nous connaissons tous ce Programme de l'Hôtel de Ville, 'un trône populaire, entouré d'*institutions* républicaines.' Il a été accepté, mais nous ne l'entendons pas *tous de même*. Il ne l'a pas toujours été par les conseils du roi, comme par moi, qui suis plus impatient que d'autres de le voir réalisé. Et quelle qu'ait toujours été mon indépendance personnelle dans toutes les situations, je me sens dans ma situation actuelle plus à l'aise pour discuter mon opinion avec vous."—*Ann. Hist.*, vol. xiv. p. 490.

occasion of the Revolution of July, and a man of vigour and courage. M. Odillon Barrot also tendered his resignation as Prefect of the Department of the Seine; but he was prevailed on to withdraw, and continue the discharge of his functions, on condition of their being considered judicial or administrative only, and altogether detached from politics. M. Taschereau, his sous-prefect, was also retained. "Odillon Barrot," said Louis Philippe, "will be no longer to be feared when he has no longer M. de Lafayette above him, and none under him but M. de Taschereau."[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, ii. 234, 235; Cap. iv. 191, 196; Ann. Hist. xiii. 505, 508.

The Government was considerably strengthened by these changes, both from the greater unity given to the Cabinet, and the increased consideration it acquired in the public estimation and in the eyes of foreign powers. It derived additional support from the news that arrived in the latter months of the year from Algeria. Marshal Bourmont, upon receiving on the 11th August the intelligence of the dethronement of Charles X., published an address announcing it to the army, and at the same time resigning the command to General Clausel, who had been appointed his successor. He soon after embarked for France, "carrying with him," as he himself said, "nothing of the hundred millions which the conquest of Algiers had brought to France, and bringing but the embalmed heart of his son." General Clausel resolved to signalise the advent of the republican party to power at Paris, by forming a chain of fortified posts through the Algerine territory in order to protect the colonists, who were presenting themselves in considerable numbers for the acquisition and cultivation of land. The expedition set out in the middle of November, and after defeating several bodies of Arabs which presented themselves, succeeded in reducing the two towns of Melideah and Medeah, with a considerable adjacent territory, under the French dominion.[2]

18. Favourable accounts from Algiers.

Nov. 25 and 26.

[2] Ann. Hist. xiii. 510, 511.

These were considerable advantages; but they yielded

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19. Great additional expenditure for the army and its forces.

in importance to the vast armaments which the new Government was compelled to make, and the great addition to the public expenses with which they were attended. The deficit of 86,000,000 francs in the revenue, which, as has been already mentioned, appeared soon after the Revolution, rapidly and alarmingly increased. Many causes contributed to bring it about. The funds had fallen fully 20 per cent between July 1830 and January 1831,* and the public misery and stagnation of commerce had become such in the latter months of the year that the suffering produced by the invasions of 1814 and 1815 had been less in comparison. It was absolutely indispensable to increase largely the government expenditure in order to counterbalance this woeful stagnation, and the clothing, arming, and equipping of 600,000 national guards, which were called out over all France, had this effect in a considerable degree. The hostile attitude of foreign powers, especially Prussia and Austria, since the revolution in Belgium, also rendered necessary a great increase of the regular army. That force, in the time of the fall of Charles X., had consisted of 131,000 infantry and 34,595 cavalry, of whom 12,000 were Swiss who were all disbanded and sent home after the Revolution of July. Their place was supplied, however, by 148,000 new French conscripts, which raised the infantry to 243,000 men, and the cavalry to 45,000, making a total of 288,000 men,—a large force, doubtless, but by no means disproportioned to what France was entitled to have on foot, considering the strength of the nation and the doubtful ground on which it stood in its relations to foreign powers.[1]

[1] Rapport du Marechal Gérard, 1 Feb. 1831; Ann. Hist. xiii. 521.

The circumstance beyond all others which rendered this great armament on the part of France necessary,

* Five per cents, 2d January 1830, 109-
Three per cents, do. 84
Five per cents, 31st December 1830, 93
Three per cents, do. 62
—*Ann. Hist.*, vol. xvi. p. 520.

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20. Competition for the crown of Belgium, and its final separation from Holland.

was the jealousies which had arisen on all sides in regard to the candidates for the crown of Belgium, now vacant by the results of the revolution in Flanders, and its definitive separation from Holland. Two candidates, and two only, presented themselves, in the first instance, for the crown—the Duke de Leuchtenberg, son of Prince Eugène Beauharnais, the far-famed Viceroy* of Italy under Napoleon, and the Duke de Nemours, second son of Louis Philippe. The separation of Belgium from Holland had been finally determined on by a congress of the ambassadors of France, England, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, on the 20th December 1830, on reasons which, under existing circumstances, appeared too well founded.* The throne being then vacant, its disposal was nominally in the hands of the Estates of Flanders; but it was evident that the European powers would all feel the deepest interest in the question involved in it, for its territory, interposed between France and Germany, bristling with strong and newly-erected fortresses, and adjoining the recent acquisitions of Prussia on the Rhine, was too important not to be of the utmost moment in the future balance of power in Europe, and its possession might have a decisive effect on the first general war

* "En formant par les traités de Vienne en 1815, l'union de la Belgique avec la Hollande, les puissances signataires de ces traités, et dont les plénipotentiaires sont assemblés dans ce moment, avaient eu pour but, de fonder un juste équilibre en Europe, et d'assurer le maintien de la paix générale. Les évènemens des quatre derniers mois ont malheureusement démontré que cet amalgame parfait et complet, que les puissances voulaient opérer entre ces deux pays, n'avait pas obtenu ce qu'il serait désormais impossible d'effectuer; qu'ainsi l'objet même de l'union de la Belgique avec la Hollande se trouvait détruit, et que des lors il devenait indispensable de recourir à d'autres arrangemens pour accomplir les intentions, à l'exécution desquelles cette union devait servir de moyen. Unie à la Hollande, et faisant partie intégrale du royaume des Pays Bas, la Belgique avait à remplir sa part des devoirs Européens de ce royaume, et des obligations que les traités lui avaient fait contracter envers les autres puissances. La rupture avec la Hollande ne saurait la libérer de cette part de ses devoirs et de ses obligations. La conférence s'occupera conséquemment de discuter et de concerter les nouveaux arrangemens les plus propres à combiner l'indépendance future de la Belgique avec les stipulations des traités, avec les intérêts et la sécurité des autres puissances, et avec la conservation de l'équilibre Européen."—*Protocole*, 20 Décembre 1830. *Ann. Hist.*, xiii. 244, 245.

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which might arise. England had been drawn into the first revolutionary war by the advance of Dumourier to Antwerp, and the opening of the mouth of the Scheldt, contrary to existing treaties,[1] and its independence might be not less seriously menaced by the incorporation of Flanders with France, in conformity with the loudly expressed wish of the revolutionists in both countries, or the bestowing of the crown of Belgium on a son of the King of the French.[2]

[1] Hist. of Europe, c. ix. § 121.

[2] Cap. iv. 244, 245; Ann. Hist. xiv. 378, 380.

21. Crown of Belgium offered to Duke de Nemours.

Notwithstanding the obvious force of these considerations, which threatened to involve Europe in a general war, if either the incorporation of Belgium with France were openly attempted, or if it was indirectly brought under French influence by its crown being bestowed on a son of the King of the French, such was the weight of the French party, and the desire of the leading party in the revolution for a connection with that country, that the

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Estates made a formal tender of the crown to the Duke de Nemours. Louis Philippe was much embarrassed by this election, however agreeable, under other circumstances, it might have been to his ambition. He had already formally announced to the Estates of Belgium "that he would never, in any event, recognise the Duke de Leuchtenberg or the Duke de Nemours as King of Belgium, or give the former, if elected, any of his daughters in marriage;" and now he was tempted by a direct offer of the crown to his son.* His own throne, however, was not sufficiently established to permit him to take a step which would probably give umbrage to all the European powers,[3] and would certainly dissolve the good understand-

Jan. 11.

[3] Cap. iv. 255, 257; Ann. Hist. xiv. 394, 396.

* "Le roi ne consentira pas à la réunion de la Belgique à la France; il n'acceptera pas la couronne pour M. le Duc de Nemours, alors-même qu'elle lui serait offerte par le Congrès. Le gouvernement verrait, dans le choix du Duc de Leuchtenberg, une combinaison de nature à troubler la tranquillité de la France. Nous n'avons pas le projet de porter la plus légère atteinte à la liberté des Belges dans l'élection de leur souverain, mais nous usons aussi de notre droit en déclarant de la manière la plus formelle que nous ne reconnaîtrons pas le Duc de Leuchtenberg."—*Dépêche de Sébastiani*, 11th January 1831. *Ann. Hist.*, vol. xiv. pp. 385, 386.

ing between France and England. He had the good sense, accordingly, to refuse the tempting offer, in terms courteous, indeed, but sufficiently firm to show that his mind was made up; and the crown of Belgium continued to be vacant, the object of diplomatic intrigue and revolutionary ambition.

22. Protocol, Jan. 20, 1831, fixing limits of Holland and Belgium.

By another protocol of the representatives of the five powers at London, on 20th January 1831, it was provided that the kingdom of Holland should embrace all the territories which formed part of the Seven United Provinces in 1789; and that of Belgium, "the whole remainder of the territories which had received the denomination of the Kingdom of the Low Countries in the treaty of 1815, *with the exception of the Grand-duchy of Luxembourg*, which the princes of the House of Nassau possessed by a different title, and which formed, and shall continue, *part of the German Confederation*. All the dispositions of the general act of the Congress of Vienna relative to the free navigation of rivers and navigable streams shall apply to the rivers and streams which traverse the Dutch or Belgian territory." Provision was also made for the mutual exchange of small detached portions of the Belgian and Dutch territory which lay *enclavés* in each other's territories, in order that the dominions of each should be rounded, and embrace none lying within the general limits of the other. This protocol was of great consequence, as fixing the respective limits of the Dutch and Belgian states, which have ever since remained separated in the European family.[1]

[1] Protocol, Jan. 20, 1831; Ann. Hist. xiv. 125; Doc. Hist.

23. Views in London and Paris on Louis Philippe's refusal.

The refusal of Louis Philippe to accept the throne of Belgium for his son gave the highest satisfaction in London, both as adjourning at least, if not avoiding, the dangers of the extension of French power and influence to the mouth of the Scheldt, and as demonstrating that the sway of Great Britain in European diplomacy was superior to that of France. It gave nearly as much satisfaction to the Republicans at Paris; for what they

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desired was, not to see a valuable appanage bestowed upon the Orléans family, already become the object of their irreconcilable hatred, but to effect an incorporation of Belgium and France in one great republic, extending to the Rhine, and recalling the glories, as it embraced the territories, of Napoleon. Meanwhile the government of Holland, recovered from the shock occasioned by the severance of Belgium, was taking the most active measures to put itself in a posture of defence. Troops were rapidly levied to increase the strength of the regular army; the patriotic spirit of the people added greatly to their number by voluntary enlistment; the frontier towns were armed, provisioned, and put in a respectable posture of defence. Already the regular army amounted to 60,000 men, which before the summer was increased to 80,000; and the spirit of the people, deeply excited by the treachery and defection of the Belgians, supported the Chambers in all the money grants requisite to support an establishment so great for a state not numbering above two millions and a-half of inhabitants.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 400, 401; Cap. iv. 246, 248.

24. Weak and distracted state of Belgium.

In Belgium, on the other hand, the usual weakness which succeeds the first burst of revolutionary strength was daily becoming more conspicuous. The country was not only without a government, but no one could foretell either what the government was to be, or into whose hands it was to fall. The diplomatic body nearly unanimously supported Prince Otho, second son of the King of Bavaria, as the candidate least likely to excite the jealousy of France or England. The Duke of Leuchtenberg was out of the question, as the French government had formally declared they would never consent to his appointment. In these circumstances, a considerable party in the Belgian Assembly began to turn their eyes to Prince LEOPOLD OF SAXE-COBOURG, whose German connections might, it was hoped, conciliate the powers of that country; while his connection with Great Britain, through the late Princess Charlotte, would probably render

him acceptable to the cabinet of St James's. Nor did it escape the notice of the Belgian patriots, that he was possessed of a jointure of £50,000 a-year as widower of the daughter of England, which might be of essential service in consolidating their infant monarchy; while by offering his hand to a daughter of France, he might conciliate the suffrages of that country, and overcome the scruples of its cautious sovereign. But these views were problematical only, and wrapped in the darkness of futurity. In the mean time, the country was without a government, and fast falling into the anarchy and helplessness which invariably succeed such an interregnum. The taxes were unpaid, the fortresses unarmed, the exchequer empty; already nearly half of the army, ashamed of their defection, had left their colours; and though the Assembly at Brussels passed repeated decrees ordering the levying of fresh troops, and calling out the *ban* and *arrière-ban*, yet no progress was made in embodying them; and while the external dangers of the country were hourly increasing, its internal means of defence were daily wasting away.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 401, 403; Cap. iv. 247, 259.

25. Perilous state of Italy.

The dangers of a general war, great as they were in the north of Europe from the difficulties which beset the Belgian question, were, in a great measure, removed by the temper and judgment displayed by the diplomatists at London, especially Prince Talleyrand and Lord Palmerston, and the sincere desire which they all felt to avoid anything which might induce hostilities. But it was otherwise in Italy, where the ardent spirit of revolution, nourished by French propagandism, and excited by French convulsions, was brought in contact with the cautious spirit of Austrian conservatism, directed by the prudent sagacity of Prince Metternich. In Milan, the seeds of revolt were ripe, and no slight fermentation was evinced on occasion of the revolutions of July and October; but the presence of a large Austrian force, the vigilance of the police, and the energetic measures of Mar-

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shal Radetsky, the governor, prevented any actual outbreak. It was otherwise, however, in the Papal States, where the government was weaker, the seditious spirit stronger, and the prospect of success to the revolutionists greater. A formidable insurrection accordingly was soon organised in the Pope's dominions, which had its principal ramifications in the Papal Legation, or provinces to the north of the Apennines, and its centre in Bologna, a city where an independent free spirit had long been in an especial manner conspicuous. The wealth of this city was great, its inhabitants amounted to sixty thousand, and its citizens were animated with that desire for a share in the government which naturally arose from a consciousness of their own strength, and a perception of the imbecility of the conclave of Cardinals by whom they were oppressed. In Modena also, and Parma, the same discontent prevailed, and the people only waited for an opportunity to shake off their oppressive petty tyrants.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 532, 535; Cap. iv. 263, 264.

26. Insurrections in Bologna, Modena, Reggio, and Parma. Feb. 3-10.

The insurrection broke out first in Modena, on the 3d of February, and was in the outset suppressed, and its leader Menotti made prisoner. But next day appearances of disturbance of a much more serious kind showed themselves in Bologna. Its garrison, which consisted of only seven hundred men, was ordered by the Prolegat, governor of the town, not to act, for fear of irritating the people. The consequences of this timidity were soon apparent. Assured of impunity whatever they did, the conspirators sallied forth from their respective places of rendezvous, and were soon strengthened by the whole students of its far-famed university. Thus supported, they advanced to the palace of the Prolegat, whom they forced to abdicate, and retire with the garrison over the Apennines to Florence. A provisional government was immediately established, comprising, among others, some dignitaries of the old Kingdom of Italy; the authority of the Pope as a temporal sovereign was overturned; the Italian tricolor, green, white, and blue, everywhere mounted, and the people invited to form

a national guard for the defence of the public liberties. The example of this successful revolution, which was effected without shedding a drop of blood, or disorders of any kind, speedily spread to the adjoining towns. The whole cities in the papal dominions to the north of the Alps broke out into open insurrection. Modena again rose the day after the success at Bologna, and the authority of the government was speedily overturned. Ancona and Reggio followed the example, as well as Ferrara, which had an Austrian garrison. The troops having no orders, and not knowing what to do, shut themselves up in the citadel, and let the citizens do what they pleased; and the feeble government of the Duchess of Parma, the widow of Napoleon, yielded to the request of a deputation of the inhabitants that she would abdicate and leave the country. In less than a week the authority of the Pope had ceased in all the provinces to the north of the Apennines; and the insurgents, encouraged by their easy success over the pontifical troops, took steps to extend their movements in every direction. Efforts were made to spread the conflagration to Tuscany, Piedmont, and Naples. A detachment from Bologna crossed the mountains, and advanced as far as Otricoli, in order to lend a hand to an insurrection which was expected in Rome; and an animated proclamation was addressed to the inhabitants of Lombardy, calling on them to shake off the hated yoke of the stranger, and concur in the general establishment of Italian freedom.[1] *

Feb. 5.

Feb. 7.

Feb. 8.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 534, 536; Cap. iv. 262, 264.

Austria, ever nervous about her Italian possessions, did

* "Concitoyens de Lombardie! Suivez l'exemple de la France, imitez les patriotes de l'Italie centrale; brisez les chaînes honteuses dont la Sainte Alliance vous a chargés. Nous étions esclaves et misérables sous le despotisme des prêtres, mais nos oppresseurs étaient du moins Italiens. Vous êtes esclaves d'étrangers qui s'enrichissent de vos dépouilles, et qui, chaque jour, vous rendent plus malheureux. Le jour où vous vous lèverez contre eux, 40,000 de nos compatriotes marcheront pour vous aider à écraser les Autrichiens. Ne tardez point; car il y a péril à hésiter. Déployez votre courage, concitoyens, et le despotisme fuira de nos belles contrées. Notre pays, notre liberté, et notre indépendance nationale avant tout!"—*Proclamation*, Bologne, 10th Feb. 1831; *Ann. Hist.* xiv. 537.

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27. Intervention of Austria in Italy.

not require this provocation to induce her to interfere in the strife to the south of the Alps. Ever since the Revolution of July in France, she had sedulously augmented her forces in Italy; and they now amounted to little short of a hundred thousand men. The Pope, the Duke of Modena, the Duchess of Parma, had each implored succour from the cabinet of Vienna, to enable them to put down the insurrection in their several states, and regain their lost possessions. On the other hand, the French at first declared that they would not permit any armed intervention of the Austrians in the affairs of Italy. After some negotiations, however, this resolution was so far modified that the cabinet of the Tuileries declared they would not object to the Imperialists moving into the Papal States to suppress the insurrection, provided they came under an engagement not to remain there, which was at once agreed to. Fortified by this consent, a division of Austrians, in the first week of March, crossed the Po, and marched on Parma and Modena; while General Frimont, at the head of twenty thousand men, advanced against Bologna. The insurgents, scarcely armed, and wholly undisciplined, were in no condition to resist forces so considerable. The Duke of Modena re-entered his dominions at the head of the Austrian troops, and immediately erected scaffolds. Menotti and Borilla, the two leaders of the insurrection, were hanged, and numbers of others sentenced to long imprisonment. Inspired with better as well as wiser feelings, the Duchess of Parma accorded a general amnesty, on the mild condition only of the leaders being excluded for three years from public employments.[1]

March 5.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 539, 540; Cap. iv. 263, 264.

28. Entry of the Austrians into Bologna, and suppression of the insurrection. March 21.

At Bologna some resistance was attempted, but finding General Frimont was at the head of such formidable forces, all thoughts of combating were laid aside, and the Austrians entered the city without resistance on the 21st. Some skirmishes between the insurgents and Imperialists took place afterwards, but nothing that could be called war anywhere ensued; and the rebels, refluent from

all quarters, were soon cooped up in Ancona, where they were glad, on 29th March, to conclude a convention by which the fortress was given up, and they laid down their arms on condition of an absolute amnesty for their persons and estates. This condition the papal government refused to ratify; various arrests took place, and commissions were instituted to try the rebels. Happily, however, no lives were sacrificed; the leaders had escaped, and a general amnesty was proclaimed, with the exception only of the members of the provisional government who had signed the deposition of the Pope. The insurrection being thus extinguished, the French government called upon the cabinet of Vienna to redeem its pledge, and withdraw from the Ecclesiastical States; but the latter, on various pretexts, delayed doing so, and it was not till the 17th July that their troops retired into Lombardy, and finally evacuated the papal dominions.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 540, 541; Cap. iv. 263, 265.

29. Affairs of Germany, and precautionary measures there.

Although the fermentation in Germany, in the course of this year, did not assume so formidable an appearance as it did in Italy, yet enough existed to excite disquietude, occasion armaments, and presage war. The King of Holland, in his character of Grand-duke of Luxembourg, in which he was a member of the Germanic Confederation, presented a petition to the Diet, praying that he might be protected in his German dominions by the Federal forces; and upon this requisition a force of 24,000 men was, by a resolution of the Federal Assembly, ordered to be stationed in that duchy to maintain the authority of the King of Holland. When this resolution was known in Brussels, the hot-headed revolutionists of that country prepared to assert their right to it by force; and if they had adhered to that resolution, a general war would have ensued; for the German Diet, to be prepared for any emergency, immediately armed the frontier fortresses on the Rhine, and put them in a respectable posture of defence. Fortunately for the peace of Europe, more rational councils ere long prevailed with the Belgian provisional government. They

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hesitated to come to a rupture with a Confederation which could bring three hundred thousand men into the field. The refusal of the throne of Belgium for his son by Louis Philippe rendered it doubtful whether, in such a contest, they would have the support of France; and the resolution of the assembled ambassadors in London that Luxembourg should form part of the dominions of the King of Holland, proved that, in attempting to enforce their pretensions, they would incur the hostility of all Europe. These considerations were so obvious that they forced themselves even on the most unwilling minds; and accordingly the intention to assert their rights by force was abandoned, and the Belgian government contented itself with making a formal demand upon the Diet for the duchy,

Aug. 12. which was formally refused. The conservative tendency of the Diet was still further evinced by two resolutions

Oct. 27. which it soon after passed, by the first of which it declared that it would refuse to receive any petitions relative to the general interests of the Confederation, as they were dangerous to the tranquillity of particular states; while

Nov. 10. by the second it was recommended to all governments to take the most vigilant steps to coerce the licentiousness

Nov. 19. of the press. Soon after the Diet passed a resolution asserting its own right to exercise a control of the press in all the states of the Confederation, and immediately gave a practical proof of its determination to enforce its power by prohibiting the circulation in all Germany of a liberal journal entitled *L'Allemagne Constitutionnelle*, published at Strasbourg, which advocated the overthrow of existing governments.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 457, 459.

30. Defensive measures in Austria.

Austria had serious matter for consideration at this period, from the state both of its own dominions and of the adjoining districts. The insurrection in Italy, which has been already mentioned, caused its government to augment largely its forces, already considerable, in that peninsula, and brave the threatened hostility of France, to prevent the spread of the revolutionary movement

through the north of Italy. But the cabinet of Vienna had soon still more pressing cause for anxiety in its own dominions. The fierce and deeply interesting war in Poland, of which an account will immediately be given, excited the warmest sympathy in all parts of the Austrian dominions, and especially in Hungary, which adjoined it, and among the inhabitants of which a strong identity of feeling with the efforts of the Sarmatian race has always existed. Alarmed at the growing fermentation in Hungary, the government of Vienna issued ordinances against the exportation of arms or munitions to Poland, and, under pretence of a *cordon sanitaire* against the cholera, established posts along the frontier of Gallicia, so as to intercept all communication with the kingdom of Poland, where the war was raging. This immediately led to anxious petitions from all parts of Hungary, in which they demanded the immediate repeal of the ordinances which prohibited the export of arms and munitions of war to Poland, and the convocation of a diet to consider of what could be done to soften the fate of the Poles. So warm were these petitions, and so deep the sympathy felt in all parts of Hungary with the efforts of the Poles to re-establish their independence, that there is no saying to what it might have led, had not a new enemy, still more formidable, appeared within themselves, which absorbed the national mind, and for the remainder of the year diverted it from the consideration of external objects. In May, the cholera, which had been very fatal in Gallicia and Poland, made its appearance in Hungary, and before it ceased in the end of September, it had carried off 102,657 persons out of 256,000 who had been seized with the disease.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 456, 459.

31. State of feeling in Prussia.

In Prussia, the dominions of which adjoined Poland on the one side, and Belgium on the other, in both of which countries the revolutionary fever was raging with peculiar violence, and the sovereigns had

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been overthrown, the warlike ardour was very strong, and it required all the prudence and wisdom of the Government to prevent war from actually breaking out. To be prepared for any event, however, the cabinet of Berlin took the most decisive measures. The army was placed on the war footing, the reserves and landwehr called out, and the fortresses on both the Flemish and Polish frontiers armed and put in a posture of defence. Extreme was the fermentation which these warlike measures produced at Berlin, and among the gallant youth of Prussia, with whom, as with the French, war is a perfect passion. At the same time, while professing an entire neutrality, the Prussian government took the most decisive measures against the Polish insurgents, and in favour of the Russian army. A powerful cordon of troops, established along the whole frontier of Poland, prevented all transit of ammunition or provisions from Prussia into the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, while the Russian army drew supplies of all sorts from the Prussian provinces, and the Russian ships of the line landed at Dantzic stores of all kinds for the use of the Russian armies carrying on the campaign. It will appear in the sequel that it was this indirect but most efficacious interference of Prussia in favour of the Muscovites which mainly overthrew the gallant and marvellous efforts of the Poles in support of their independence in this memorable year.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 460, 461.

32. Great fermentation in the lesser states of Germany.

The vast military force at the disposal of government in these great monarchies rendered hopeless any attempts of the liberal party at insurrection within their dominions. But it was otherwise in the lesser states, where the resources of government were much less considerable, and in most of which constitutional assemblies existed, which both kept alive the hopes of the friends of freedom, and afforded a legal channel for making their demands known. In Bavaria, the court had taken an imprudent step in rejecting some liberal deputies

recently elected to the Chamber, and in proposing rigorous decrees to coerce the press. This immediately excited a storm of indignation in the country, which burst forth in violent petitions from Nuremberg, Bamberg, and other great towns in the Confederacy. The Government, however, persevered; and five edicts coercing the press, and giving a right of censorship to the crown, were, after a violent opposition, and with several modifications, at length passed by a majority of 7—the numbers being 59 to 52. They were immediately and rigorously acted upon by the Government, and the discontent thence arising produced serious results in after times. In Baden the Government took the initiative in various measures of reform, particularly in the judicial department, the municipalities, and the *corvées*, which gave universal satisfaction. The independent spirit of the Chamber, however, was evinced in a protest which was brought forward by M. Rotteck, one of the most celebrated journalists of Germany, and unanimously adopted, against Baden yielding obedience to, or being bound by, the resolutions of the Diet of the Confederation of 10th and 19th November, against the liberty of the press. Though the matter went no farther at this time than the recording a protest on the journals of the Assembly, yet it excited a great sensation, and gave token of the free spirit with which the inhabitants of the lesser states of Germany were animated, which led to such great results at a future time.[1]*

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 461, 469.

The discontent which was so general in Germany during this year broke out into serious acts of violence in Saxony and Hanover. In Dresden, the people, dis-

* "Profitons des instants précieux pendant lesquels nous pouvons encore faire entendre nos voix, pour les élever en faveur de la patrie et de la liberté. Protestons que jamais, même quand nos langues seraient liées, nos âmes ne se soumettront à un tel arrêt, et que nous ne cesserons de protester, du moins par un morne silence et de sombres regards, contre la violation de la souveraineté de l'état de Bade, venue de la diète, et contre la suppression de nos droits constitutionnels. L'Assemblée se leva en masse."—*Ann. Hist.* xiv. 468.

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Troubles in Saxony and Hesse-Cassel.

April 17.

Aug. 30.

Dec. 2. 1830,

April 25, 1831.

Jan. 8.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 472, 476.

contented because the existing constitution did not give them the entire command of the State, as their influence did not extend to the Upper Chamber, formed themselves into clubs and unions, where the most inflammatory principles were soon promulgated. In the middle of April, a contest began between the clubs and the royal troops, when the latter were victorious, but not before the disturbance had lasted three days, and several persons had been killed. To appease the people, some concessions were made in matters of constitutional right, but they were far from allaying the discontent; and on 30th August another insurrection, still more serious, took place, when the mob unpaved the streets, and began to erect barricades, and were only dispersed by heavy platoon-firing, which killed great numbers. In Brunswick, the interregnum consequent on the dethronement of the reigning prince, of which an account has already been given, was terminated by the Diet authorising his younger brother to assume the reins of government; and on the 25th April following he received the joyous homage of his subjects. In Hesse-Cassel a great fermentation prevailed, and appearances were at one time very threatening; but they were appeased by the judicious conduct of the Government, which established, of its own accord, a constitution similar to those in the other lesser states of Germany. This gave great satisfaction; but the Chambers and people complained that the Elector did not reside at his capital of Cassel, but at a distant chateau of Wilhelmshohe. He positively refused to yield this point; and the remonstrance of the Chambers and discontent of the people became in consequence so violent, that he was obliged to name his brother Frederick-William co-regent, who came to Cassel, and exercised the functions of government in the absence of the Elector.[1]

In Hanover the revolutionary spirit also showed itself, and for a time with more threatening symptoms. On the

7th January a movement took place at Osterode in that kingdom, which ended in the establishment of a national guard, under pretext of defending persons and property, while the citizens were laying their grievances before the Duke of Cambridge, the viceroy of the kingdom. This was followed next day by an open insurrection in Göttingen, when the people displaced all the constituted authorities, proclaimed a provisional government, and invited every other municipality in the kingdom to do the same. The conduct of the Duke of Cambridge on this occasion was characterised by vigour and decision. Collecting a body of troops, he marched in person direct to Göttingen, and having arrived on the 15th before the gates of the city, he gave the insurgents twelve hours to lay down their arms, and surrender at discretion. This was at first refused, and preparations for resistance made; but the insurgents, finding themselves not supported by the rest of the country, lost heart, and submitted next day to the proposed terms. Having gained this advantage by his vigour and celerity, the Duke wisely proceeded to deprive the malcontents of their chief grounds of complaint, by publishing a constitution soon after, consisting of two Chambers; the first composed of the princes of the blood, the nobles, and a few named by the King; the second of ninety-five deputies chosen by the different classes of the citizens.[1]

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34. Insurrection in Hanover.

Jan. 7.

Jan. 8.

Jan. 15.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 479, 480.

35. Violence of parties, and misery in Paris.

Threatening as appearances were in Italy and Germany, they were yet outdone at this period by what was exhibited in Paris itself. The elements of discord and confusion there went on increasing, during the whole of January and the first week of February, to such a degree that it was evident to all a serious convulsion was at hand. All parties were discontented, all were suffering, all were disappointed. The Revolution had injured many, and benefited none excepting those who had got possession of power and office by the elevation of Louis

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Philippe. It was hard to say whether the Republicans, the Napoleonists, or the Legitimists, were most querulous and indignant. The former loudly complained that they had gained nothing by the Revolution, that its fruits had been reft from them by fraud and chicanery, and that, under a new name, the old Government had been imposed on them, distinguished from its predecessor only by increased extravagance and more arbitrary principles. The partisans of Napoleon lamented that the glorious event of the Revolution had been suffered to evaporate without producing any durable result, and that the golden opportunity of regaining the frontier of the Rhine, during the first terror consequent on the Revolution of July, had been allowed to pass away. The Legitimists, with equal or greater truth, asserted that the general distresses were entirely owing to the overthrow of the ancient line of monarchs, pointed with exultation to the increased expenditure and diminished receipts of Government, and contrasted it with the opposite state of things which had prevailed during the government of the Restoration.[1] * In the midst of this chorus of complaints and recriminations commerce was at a stand, industry without employment, suffering without relief, and all the public offices were surrounded by starving multitudes, whose numbers and threatening

[1] Louis Blanc, ii. 266, 268; Ann. Hist. xiv. 80, 81; Cap. iv. 270, 282.

* Seven first months of 1830, receipts of Treasury exceeded expenditure by 12,300,000 francs, or £500,000

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Deficit August 1830, | 5,651,000 | | |
| Do. September „ | 6,881,000 | | |
| Do. October „ | 5,454,000 | | |
| Do. November „ | 4,044,000 | | |
| Do. December „ | 12,377,000 | | |
| Deficit in five months of Revolution, | 34,397,000 | francs, or | £1,320,000 |
| Estimated deficit of 1831, | 54,000,000 | „ | 2,200,000 |
| Losses of commerce in 1830, since July, | 50,000,000 | „ | 2,000,000 |
| Losses from Revolution in five months, | 138,397,000 | „ | £5,520,000 |

—L. Blanc, vol. ii. p. 208.

aspect forbade refusal, while their woeful appearance demonstrated distress, and their numbers precluded effectual succour.

36. Alarming budget of 1831, and its effects.

The minds of all parties were in this feverish and excited state, each deploring the public suffering, and throwing upon the other the responsibility of having occasioned it, when the ministerial budget was brought forward, and revealed at once the frightful gulf into which the finances of the kingdom were on the point of falling.* The finance minister laid before the Chamber a statement of the probable expense of the year, which, taking into view the floating debt which it was necessary to provide for, amounted to the enormous sum of 1,434,655,000 francs (£58,500,000), being an increase of nearly 500,000,000 francs (£20,000,000) on the last budget of the Restoration!

* FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE FOR THE YEAR 1831.

| | Francs. | |
|---|---|---|
| Old debt prior to 1830, | 160,400,000 | |
| Sums advanced beyond receipts since 1830, | 90,755,458 | |
| Expenses of 1831 for budget, | 1,177,000,000 | |
| Additional budget, | 6,500,000 | |
| To be provided for, | 1,434,655,458 | or £57,500,000 |
| Ways and means, | 1,223,000,000 | or 49,000,000 |
| To be provided for by loans, | 211,655,458 | or £8,650,000 |
| Vote of credit farther required, | 60,000,000 | or 2,400,000 |
| To be raised by loan, or kept up as floating debt, | 271,655,458 | or £10,900,000 |

—*Ann. Hist.* vol. xiv. p. 193.

Ample as these estimates were, they were less than the total expenditure the year, which reached the enormous amount of 1,511,000,000 francs, £60,400,000.

RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE OF THE LAST YEARS OF CHARLES X., AND FIRST YEARS OF LOUIS PHILIPPE.

| Year. | *Dépenses.* Francs. | *Recettes.* Francs. |
|---|---|---|
| 1826, | 976,948,919 | 981,882,722 |
| 1827, | 986,934,765 | 947,951,091 |
| 1828, | 1,024,100,035 | 1,028,274,227 |
| 1829, | 1,014,914,432 | 1,022,782,692 |
| 1830, | 1,095,142,115 | 1,020,299,082 |
| 1831, | 1,214,610,975 | 1,306,572,792 |
| 1832, | 1,174,620,247 | 1,064,031,296 |

—*Statistique de la France*, 121, 145—(Finances.)

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Of this huge sum, it is true, 160,400,000 francs (£6,500,000) was stated to be debt anterior to 1830, and for which the Government of Louis Philippe was not responsible; but still the regular budget of 1831 amounted to 1,177,000,000 francs (£45,200,000), and it confessed extra advances of no less than 90,755,000 francs (£3,750,000) since 1830, for which no provision had been made. And after taking into view every imaginable resource, and stating every sum that possibly could be brought to bear against the old Government, there remained a deficit of 211,655,000 francs (£8,450,000) to be provided for by loan, or carried forward as floating debt, to cripple the income of future years. The receipts of the year, from ordinary sources, were taken at 947,940,000 francs (£39,800,000); 46,000,000 francs (£1,800,000) was added to the land-tax; and no less than 310,000,000 francs (£12,250,000) was proposed to be raised by loans in a year of peace, and the first of the reign of the Citizen-King and of the regenerated monarchy.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 193, Exposé du Ministre de Finance; and App., 105, Tableau de Finances.

37. Universal indignation it excited.

No words can describe the storm of indignation which arose in Paris, and over all France, upon the promulgation of this alarming budget. In truth, it was unavoidable, and arose necessarily from the vast increase of the expenditure for the army and ordnance, which was the natural consequence of the position which France, antagonistic to continental Europe, had now assumed. The estimate for the army, which in 1829 had been 214,576,000 francs (£8,500,000), had risen in 1831 to 386,624,000 francs (£11,750,000.)* This was the necessary consequence of arming for defence or attack against Europe. But this result, how natural or obvious soever a consequence of the Revolution of July, which put it in a state of antagonism with the Continental powers, was by no means what the authors of that revolution intended when

* The troops, which were 255,323 in the first year, had risen to 368,921 in the second, and in 1832 amounted to 389,273.—*Stat. de la France*, vol. x. p. 194.

they brought it about. They had no intention of adding 50 per cent to the military force or public expenditure of the kingdom. They expected to be permitted to send their propagandists through all the adjoining states, and effect the overthrow of all their governments, without any increase of their own expenses, or being called on to arm or spend money in their own defence. Whatever visions may flit before the minds of the bourgeois who effect a revolution, assuredly *increase of expenditure and taxation* is not one of them.[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, ii. 279, 281; Stat. de la France, 194 (Finances).

38. Deplorable situation of commerce and credit.

What rendered this great increase in the expenditure and taxation of the kingdom still more exasperating, was its advent at a time when the industrial resources of the kingdom, so far from increasing, were rapidly diminishing, and the general misery of the country was in consequence at its height. Statistical facts of unquestionable authenticity, which the Government of Louis Philippe itself has adduced, prove this beyond a doubt. The commercial paper, under discount at the Bank of France, which in 1829 had been 129,000,000 francs (£5,400,000), had sunk in 1832 to 29,000,000 francs (£1,140,000.)* The sums advanced by the Bank of France to the public exchequer, which in 1828 had been 73,000,000 francs (£2,700,000), had risen in 1830 to 291,500,000 francs (£11,600,000). The five per cents, which in 1829 had been all 109.85 cents, sunk in 1831 to 74.75 cents. The exports in the former year had been 504,247,000 francs (£20,200,000), in the latter they had sunk to 455,000,000 francs (£18,200,000); the imports, which in the first year had been 483,000,000 francs (£19,200,000), had sunk in the last to 374,000,000 francs (£15,750,000).[2] So great a

[2] Stat. de la France, x. 47, 49, 189, 192.

* Table of Discounts of the Bank of France in Francs.

| Year. | Commercial Paper held by Bank. Maximum. | Minimum. | Discount in Year. | Produce of Discount. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1830, | 128,598,000 | 75,446,000 | 617,494,000 | 4,021,000 |
| 1831, | 84,944,000 | 25,190,000 | 222,524,000 | 1,845,700 |
| 1832, | 29,678,000 | 18,625,000 | 150,723,000 | 1,031,000 |

—*Statistique de la France*, vol. x. p. 187—(Finances).

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diminution of receipts and increase of burdens in so short a time, indicated in the clearest manner the calamitous action of the Revolution on the industry and resources of the nation.*

39. General indignation of the democrats.

The effect of this state of things is thus described by the Republican historian who has so ably described the course of the Revolution. "An assembly of notables elected by another assembly of notables, and directed by ministerial agents—such was the new system of government, such the economy of the new laws! The ministerial power rested on thirty-four thousand little bourgeois oligarchies. All the democrats were in commotion. 'What!' exclaimed they—'is this the course into which we are to be turned by the Revolution? Is France to pass under the yoke of notabilities of municipalities and notabilities of offices? What do those municipal capacities signify, which are revealed only by the weight of burdens and increased taxation? Better to destroy at once the shadow of a representation than to corrupt it. The electoral right has become only the strongest instrument of tyranny. If the rich predominate in the municipal councils, we shall only have organised a protection for the interests which have least need of protection." [1]

[1] Louis Blanc, ii. 230.

40. Extravagant ideas generally afloat in society at this time.

This woeful social state, immediately succeeding, as it did, the ardent hopes and boundless expectations of felicity which the Revolution of July had ushered in, led, as is usual in such cases, to every imaginable excess in opinion and belief. When men, in the political world, are suffering the punishment of their sins, or smarting under the consequences of their transgressions, they never recede or pause in their course till the extremity of suffering

* EXPORTS AND IMPORTS OF FRANCE FROM 1828 TO 1831.

| Year. | Exports. | Imports. |
|---|---|---|
| 1828, | 511,215,000 | 453,760,000 |
| 1829, | 504,247,000 | 483,353,000 |
| 1830, | 452,901,000 | 489,242,000 |
| 1831, | 455,574,000 | 374,188,539 |

—*Statistique de la France*, x. 45, 46—(Commerce).

has been endured, and society is brought back by absolute force to more rational sentiments. The drunkard who, the morning after his debauch, is suffering for his sins, seldom thinks of retracing his steps and becoming habitually sober; he seeks relief for the moment in fresh intoxication, in still more stimulating spirits. With the blasting of all their hopes of the regeneration of society by revolution, the Republicans took refuge in still more violent principles, and the doctrines of the St Simonians became the creed of the great majority of the working classes in the capital. Their position was, that the remuneration of labour should be regulated by a power issuing from itself, and capable of judging of its just demands; that production should be concentrated, and its fruits distributed to each in proportion to his merit; that the transmission of property by inheritance, as of employment, should be annihilated; that marriage, the "legalisation of adultery," should be abolished, and give place to the "sovereignty of passion—the emancipation of pleasure;" and that the government of society should be substituted for that of families in the education of the young. Such were the doctrines which were daily poured forth and ably elaborated in numerous publications, particularly the *Globe* newspaper, by a band of powerful, eloquent, and sensual young men. It may be conceived how agreeable these doctrines were to the numerous class, including the natural children, in Paris, forming *a third of the entire population*, which, destitute of property, and having no hopes of succession, was yet steeped in sensual desires, and thirsting for the enjoyments consequent on affluence; enjoyments which had hitherto, as it seemed to them, unjustly been monopolised by a single and limited class in society.[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, ii. 268, 269.

In truth, however, the state to which society had been brought in France by the effect of the first great Revolution, had now become such that its regeneration, or the removal by moral influence of the existing evils, had become impossible. It is thus painted by the ablest of

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41. State of corruption into which the system of centralisation had sunk France.

the republican historians: "Centralisation, introduced by the Convention, and carried to its highest point by Napoleon, had for a quarter of a century constituted the power and glory of France. The unity of the Mountain had conquered Europe. But from the moment that it was no longer necessary that France should be one soldier, the excess of centralisation had become a source of weakness. At the epoch of the first year of Louis Philippe, the greater part of the rural districts of France vegetated in a state of ignorance, egotism, languor, and misery, which is scarcely credible. There was no longer any trace of *esprit de corps*, common passion, or prescriptive usage. The blood had been *drawn from all parts of the social body to the surcharged heart.* What was the consequence? A marvellous ardour, ending in impotence and scepticism in the capital; the concentration of all power, inferring that of all ambition; the desire to shine carried to effrontery; an immense absorption to produce a little intelligence; talents the most original perverted by the mania of imitation, the thirst for gain, the despotism of fashion, or the impatient desire of success; competition with its frauds; rascality and its opprobrium; excitement without end, but for evil rather than good; immense resources, but these rather fitted to nourish vain illusions than to satisfy legitimate hopes; civilisation exhausting its frauds and illusions to render man unhappy or guilty. Such was life in the capital under the influence of centralisation. France around Paris was the void around chaos." [1]

[1] Louis Blanc, ii. 279.

42. Moral statistics of Paris at this period.

Under the influence of this unbounded chaos of passion, licentiousness, and ambition, the moral corruption of Paris rapidly increased. The natural births in the department of the Seine, in 1831, amounted to 11,044, and the foundlings to 5803, while the legitimate births were only 24,391. In other words, the foundlings and natural children taken together were *two-thirds* of the number of the legitimate! The births, both legitimate and illegiti-

mate, increased considerably in 1831, though the misery of the people was at its height,—a sure proof of the spread of reckless habits and physical indulgence among a squalid and excited population.* In the same year, the persons admitted into the public hospitals, in the department of the Seine, including Paris, were 84,957, of whom 10,910 died in them, and 30,118 remained in them on January 1, 1832. The expense of these hospitals was 10,054,000 francs in the year (£404,000). The persons relieved at home in Paris, in that year, were 70,503, and the sums expended on them 2,041,000 francs (£82,000). It is hard to say whether these figures attest most strongly the seeds of evil which the Revolution had implanted in the country, or the admirable spirit with which their effects were combated by the benevolent feelings and incomparable powers of administration by which France has always been characterised.[1]

[1] Stat. de la France—Administration Publique, 28, 29, 99.

43. Tumult in the church of St Germain l'Auxerrois. Feb. 14.

To a people in this extraordinary state of excitement, passion, and suffering, there was nothing so hateful as the restraint which religion imposed on their indulgences. This soon appeared. The 14th February was the anniversary of the death of the Duke de Berri; and the Royalists, with more courage than prudence, were preparing to celebrate a funeral service in memory of that unhappy prince. The ceremony was originally designed for the church of St Roch, in the Rue St Honoré; but the Minister of the Interior, having received intelligence of the intention, applied to the Archbishop of Paris, by whose authority it was prohibited there, as likely to lead to disturbances. Upon this it was determined to celebrate it in the church of St Germain l'Auxerrois, that beautiful monument of the revival of taste after the middle

* Births in the Department of the Seine.

| | 1829. | 1830. | 1831. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Legitimate, . . . | 23,534 | 23,788 | 24,391 |
| Illegitimate, . . . | 10,615 | 10,711 | 11,044 |
| Foundlings, . . . | 5,487 | 5,341 | 5,803 |

—*Statistique de la France*, 28 (Commerce).

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ages, and which was universally admired as one of the finest specimens of that style of architecture in the world. On the day appointed the Royalist nobility flocked there in great numbers. Long lines of carriages, with handsome liveries, were seen waiting at the doors; and in the interior of the church the service for the dead was performed with all the magnificence which the Roman Catholic religion so well knows how to display on such occasions. The *Miserere* and *Dies Iræ* melted the audience, great part of which was composed of ladies, to tears; and in the enthusiasm of the moment some ardent Royalists passed a crowned miniature of the Duke de Bordeaux from hand to hand, and even had the imprudence to place it on the coffin, that the child might seem to share in the prayers offered up for the soul of the father.[1]

[1] Cap. iv. 295, 297; Ann. Hist. xiv. 80, 81; Louis Blanc, ii. 284, 285.

44. Sack of the church.

Intelligence of what was going on in the interior of the church speedily spread abroad, and the crowd, whom curiosity had attracted to the doors, immediately swelled to a most alarming degree. The police interfered, and the young man who had put the image on the coffin was arrested; but this was far from satisfying the public fury. No sooner was the service concluded than a furious multitude broke into the sanctuary of the church, and the house of the curé adjoining, and in the twinkling of an eye everything was sacked or tossed out of the windows. The splendid decorations and ornaments with which the piety of the Bourbon princes had adorned the sanctuary, where they had listened to the eloquence of Bourdaloue and Massillon, were torn down and destroyed. The cross, the symbol of salvation, was in an especial manner the object of popular fury. Under the pretence that the cross at the west end of the church had *fleurs-de-lis* carved on its stones, the multitude demanded that it should be pulled down. The mayor of the fourth arrondissement of Paris, who was present, gave his consent. In a few minutes the cross was torn down, and fell with

a tremendous crash, and in its fall brought down with it a part of the organ, the fragments of which strewed the pavement of the church. This achievement excited the people to the utmost fury: all the crosses, both on the outside and inside of the church, were speedily torn down, the ornaments disappeared, and this once splendid interior exhibited only a melancholy heap of ruins. The national guard were present with the magistrates the whole time, but they remained passive spectators of the devastation.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 82, 83; Cap. iv. 298, 301; Louis Blanc, ii. 284, 285.

45. Sack of Archbishop's palace at Nôtre Dame.

No sooner was the work of destruction completed at St Germain l'Auxerrois than the cry arose "*A Nôtre Dame!*" and instantly the crowd rushed in that direction with such rapidity that the national guard, which was not very anxious to arrive at the scene of ruin, was unable to keep pace with them. Part broke into the cathedral, which had stood erect and unshaken amidst all the storms of the first Revolution, and immediately began pulling down the crosses and defacing the ornaments, as they had done at St Germain l'Auxerrois. But the greater part fastened on the Archbishop's palace adjoining the Hôtel Dieu, in the square in front of the cathedral. In a few minutes it was surrounded; but as it was by this time dark, the crowds separated, after vowing to return the following morning to complete the work of destruction. They were as good as their word. Early on the following morning a furious crowd returned to the Archbishop's palace, which, by negligence or design, had only been left under the care of a hundred men of the national guard, and immediately broke in through the doors and windows. The civic force made no resistance; and so speedy was the work of destruction that before noon not only was the whole palace sacked and pillaged, but it was pulled down from top to bottom, and not one stone was left upon another. The noble library of the Archbishopric, containing a great number of rare and valuable manuscripts, with all the precious

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movables and furniture which the palace contained, were taken out and thrown from the little bridge into the Seine amidst horrid imprecations and shouts of laughter. From Nôtre Dame the mob moved to the churches of St Roch and of the Assumption, in order to destroy the crosses on those sacred edifices; but "happily," says the French annalist, "the promptitude of the Government had anticipated them, and the crosses were already destroyed." Next day a royal ordinance was published, ordering the removal of the crosses from all the churches in Paris, and directing the formation of a new State seal, *without* the emblem of salvation which had hitherto appeared on it, and the erasure of the *fleur-de-lis* from the arms of the royal family.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 83, 85; Cap. iv. 302, 304, 309; Louis Blanc, ii. 285, 286.

46. Attacks on individuals, and deplorable weakness of Government.

Not content with these disgraceful outrages against religion, which went far to discredit the Revolution in the eyes of foreign nations, the mob in Paris endeavoured to wreak their vengeance on obnoxious individuals. On the night of the 14th, two hundred savage wretches repaired to the house of M. Dupin, a member of the Chamber of Deputies, and a most distinguished man, and demanded he should be given up to them. Already were heard the cries, "*La mort! la mort!—à la lanterne!*" and it was only by the courage of one man, who defended the doorway, that he escaped by a back window. A second band attacked the Posts on the Petit Pont and the Rue St André du Ares, and disarmed them; and a third invaded Conflans, the country residence of the Archbishop of Paris, a prelate known only by his unwearied deeds of beneficence, and sacked it from top to bottom. Another band broke into Nôtre Dame, tossed about and profaned the sacred vases beyond what had been seen in the days of Chaumette and Robespierre, and even devastated the sepulchres of the dead beneath that sacred fane. What rendered these outrages the more alarming was the evident and pitiable weakness of Government. A few lines in the *Moniteur*, a proclamation *against the Carlists*, and the arrest of some of *their* leaders, and a proclamation from

the Minister of the Interior praising the Parisians for their noble conduct, but recommending "*respect aux monuments publics*,"—such were the sole steps taken by Government to stop or punish these atrocious crimes. The really guilty escaped wholly unpunished; none of them were even apprehended. The journals, with servile adulation, vied with each other in praising the people, and declared "that never had the sun shone on a more brilliant carnival, or the masquerades been more ravishing."[1]

[1] Moniteur, Feb. 16, 1831; Ann. Hist. xiv. 84, 85; Cap. iv. 301, 304.

47. Fall of Lafitte, and appointment of Casimir Périer in his stead. March 13.

It was now all over with the ministry of M. Lafitte. The magnitude of the budget had deprived him of all his popularity in Paris. The disorders of February, and proved weakness of the executive, had sunk him to the lowest point in the estimation of Europe. The King was sensitively alive to the latter danger: he dreaded nothing so much as being implicated, in the eyes of foreign powers, with the disorders of the Revolution, and deprived of the prestige arising from the idea that he was the only possible barrier against its excesses. He resolved, accordingly, to sacrifice his minister, hoping thus to throw upon the author of the Revolution the responsibility for its consequences. By a royal ordinance, on March 13th, Lafitte was dismissed, and M. CASIMIR PÉRIER, a great banker and manufacturer in Paris, was appointed President of the Council and Minister of the Interior, in his stead. M. Merilhou also was dismissed from his situation as Minister of Justice, and M. Barthe appointed in his room. Baron Louis was made Minister of Finance, Admiral de Rigny of Marine, and the Count d'Argout of Public Instruction and Worship. Only three of these ministers were new, viz. M. Casimir Périer, Baron Louis, and Admiral de Rigny, the others being merely transposed from one office to another; but the vigour and capacity of the new ministers, especially M. Casimir Périer and Baron Louis, impressed a different character upon the Government, and warranted the assertion that it was directed by a new Cabinet.[2]

[2] Moniteur, March 13, 1831; Ann. Hist. xiv. 156, 157; Cap. iv. 356, 370.

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48. Views of parties on this change of Ministry.

On the day succeeding the formation of the new Cabinet, the following article appeared in the *Journal des Debats*, at that period high in the confidence of Government: "For the last four months the Government has been without a system; that is the reproach which its adversaries and partisans alike make against it. It is the want of system which has induced its vacillation and irresolution—that has made its weakness, which was great, and might be fatal. It put the salvation of France in peril. The appointment of the new Ministry signalises the advent of a new system; it at least gives us reason to hope. That system is to govern by the Chambers—to consider their opinion as the expression of the opinion of France, and to disregard all opinion out of it. It wishes peace, but such only as is honourable, and may be lasting. Order is the first necessity of France. Credit is shaken, commerce expiring; order alone can re-establish it. We stand in need of security rather than repose; order alone can re-establish security. *Tyranny no longer comes from above; it comes from below.*"[1] There can be no doubt that these observations were well founded. Experience and suffering had wrenched truth even out of the warmest organ of the Revolution! But what the partisans of that convulsion did not see, or would not admit, was, that the weakness in Government and disorder in the State, which they justly deplored as the immediate causes of the universal suffering, were the inevitable results of what they themselves had done. They ascribed to the weakness of a man what was, in fact, the punishment of the sins of a nation. Lafitte was a person of some powers of speaking and agreeable manners, though of no great energy of character; but had he possessed the firmness of Carnot, the eloquence of Mirabeau, or the energy of Napoleon, the result would have been the same. The minister of the Revolution, he was constrained to bend to its excesses. He became unpopular, and fell, not because he failed in the essential condition of his ministerial existence—obe-

[1] *Journal des Debats*, March 15, 1831.

dience to the public voice—but because, in yielding that obedience, he had unavoidably conducted the nation to anarchy, misery, and suffering. The people mistook for the delinquencies of a man, what was, in truth, the chastisement of themselves.

49. Change in the Electoral Law.

In order, however, to carry out the ministerial programme of governing by the Chambers, and regarding them as the sole organ of public opinion, it was indispensable to take some steps which might render the decision of the representative part of the legislature more in harmony with the majority of the people, which, under the uniform qualification of 300 francs (£12) of direct taxes, was very far from being the case. The Chamber of Deputies had become utterly discredited in public estimation, since the Revolution of July, from the blind submission it had yielded to the demands of Government, and, above all, to the enormous budget and increase of taxes, which had spread such alarm throughout France. As usual, the popular party sought a remedy for this state of things in lowering the suffrage. They thought that would admit themselves, and put all right; not seeing that, as long as the suffrage was uniform, class government would still be at the head of affairs, and *all out of that class* would find themselves unrepresented. Louis Philippe felt the necessity of yielding in some degree to the demands of the democratic portion of society, but he resolved to make the change as little as possible; and the general intelligence had not yet learned the vital truth, that all attempts to remedy the representative system, while a uniform suffrage is kept up, prove ineffectual. After much discussion and many amendments, it was agreed to fix the electoral qualification at payment of 200 francs (£8) of direct taxes, and for candidates at 750 francs (£30). These payments corresponded to incomes of £40 and £150 a-year;[1] and though the evil of uniformity of qualification, and consequent class government, was not obviated, yet the concession to the popular party was

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 121, 147.

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considerable, for it raised the electors from 90,000 to 180,000 over all France.

50. Proscription of the elder branch of the Bourbons. March 24.

A severe law, alike discreditable to the Sovereign who proposed and the Chamber which adopted it, was soon after brought forward in France. This was one banishing the ex-King, Charles X., his descendants, and their relations, for ever from the French territory, and prohibiting them from acquiring, by any title, onerous or gratuitous, any property, or to enjoy any rent or annuity. They were ordained to leave France, and sell their whole effects, within six months, under pain of the confiscation of all their property, without exception, in France. If the entire sales were not effected in the prescribed six months, they were directed to be sold by the public authorities, in the same manner as the State domains appointed to be alienated, and their produce applied to the fund for the indemnity of the ancient proprietors, after deduction of what might be awarded to the sufferers by the events of July. After a violent opposition from the Royalists, and the addition of an amendment prohibiting all services on the anniversary of the death of Louis XVI., the law was carried, with the difference of a year being allowed for the sale of the effects, by a majority of 210 to 122. Such was the return, when he had the power, which Louis Philippe made to Charles X. for the generous grant which, on his accession to the throne, restored their whole estates in fee-simple to the Orléans family, by the same title by which the Crown enjoyed the royal domains, and conferred upon its head the much coveted title of "Royal Highness."[1] History has not preserved the record of a more flagrant and disgraceful act of ingratitude; and it only proves what so many events in public and private life concur in demonstrating, that the commission of one great crime leads to that of another, and that the guilty party finds himself at length on a rapid descent, from which extrication is impossible and destruction certain.[2]

[1] Ante, c. xvi. § 4.

[2] Ann. Hist. xiv. 173, 179.

51. Violent opposition of the liberal journals to Casimir Périer, and formation of the National Association.

Aware, from the character of Casimir Périer, as well as the declarations with which it set out, that the new Cabinet would prove a much more formidable antagonist than the last had been, the democratic journals, from the very first, denounced it in the most unmeasured terms. The *Courrier Français* foresaw, in the coming future, a period even more disgraceful to France than that of the Restoration; the *National* could see no difference between the administration of M. Casimir Périer and that of Prince Polignac. The *Tribune* called on all patriots to come forward and openly resist it. In pursuance of these suggestions, an association was formed, styled the National Association, the members of which bound themselves, "on their life and honour, to combat the stranger *and the Bourbons* by all pecuniary and personal sacrifices, to come to no accommodation with them, to whatever extremities the country may be reduced."[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 159, 160.

52. Casimir Périer's speech on the principles of his government.

On the 18th of March, M. Casimir Périer thus announced, both with reference to the interior and exterior, the principles of the new Government: "Our principles are those of our Revolution, neither exaggerated nor lessened. The principle of the Revolution of July, and of the government which it has established, is not that of insurrection—it is that of resistance to the aggressions of power. France was provoked and defied; it defended itself, and proved victorious. Respect to sworn faith, regard to established right,—such are the principles of the Revolution of July, and of the government which it has established. It has founded a government, it has not inaugurated anarchy. It has not overturned the social order; it has only touched the political order. Its object was the establishment of a free but regular government. Violence, either within or without, is alike adverse to the principles of our government. Within, every appeal to force, without, every provocation to popular insurrection, is a violation of its principle. In the interior, its duty is simple. Our institutions are regulated by the charter of

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1830. The present session has resolved some questions of the highest political importance; the Chamber which is to succeed it will determine those which remain. It is *from it, and it alone,* that France awaits the bringing to perfection its institutions. Till it meets, the Government has but one duty to perform—to maintain order, to execute the laws, to cause power to be respected. It is legal order and established power which society requires; for it is the want of power and order which has spread distrust, and engendered the whole embarrassments and dangers with which we are surrounded.

53. Continued, in reference to foreign affairs.

"Armed to defend its own rights, France knows how to respect those of others; its conduct is not regulated by its passions. We wish the peace so necessary to our liberties; but we would not shrink from war, if the honour or security of France were menaced, and we would then appeal with the utmost confidence to the patriotism of the nation. At the first signal France will be found ready; and the King has not forgot that it was in the camp that he first learned to serve his country. The principle of non-intervention has been appealed to; we adopt it, and it is on that ground that we maintain that foreign powers have no right to intermeddle in our internal affairs. We ourselves practise that principle on every occasion, and we incessantly appeal to it in our intercourse with foreign nations. Is that to say that we are to carry our arms abroad whenever that principle is not respected? That would be an intervention of another kind; that would be to renew the principles of the Holy Alliance, and to fall into the chimerical ideas of those who would subject Europe to a single idea, and realise the visions of universal empire. Thus understood, the principle of non-intervention could serve only as a mark to the spirit of conquest.[1] We will, under all circumstances, support the principle of non-intervention; but we do not recognise in any people the right to compel us to combat for their interests: the blood of France is due to France alone.

[1] Moniteur, March 19, 1831; Ann. Hist. xiv. 162, 165.

We feel confidence in the fortune of France; but that it should have confidence in itself, it is necessary that we should respond to its dearest interests; that we should say aloud what has long been said in secret, Truth should be told to nations as well as kings."

54. Louis Philippe's efforts to conciliate the electors.

How true soever these principles might be, and well calculated to calm the apprehensions of foreign powers as to the ability or disposition of the government of Louis Philippe to curb the revolutionary spirit in France, there could be no doubt that, for the time at least, they augmented the difficulties of his Government. It was very difficult to foretell how the majority would incline at the next election; for although the number of electors had been nearly doubled by lowering the qualification to two hundred francs, yet it was known that the revolutionary law of succession, by constantly leading to the division of properties, was daily lessening the number of those who paid that amount of direct taxes; and at least a fourth of the whole electors, including those who held the largest amount of property, belonged to the Legitimist party. If they were to coalesce with the Republicans, whose numbers had been considerably increased by the lowering of the suffrage, the Government might be thrown into a minority. Impressed with these ideas, and deeming the establishment of his throne, not without reason, mainly dependent on getting a majority in the new Chambers, the King exerted himself to the utmost to secure it. The Chamber of Deputies was prorogued by the King in person, with great pomp, on the 28th April. With regret the monarch took leave of a legislature which had given him a throne. Soon after a royal proclamation dissolved the Chamber, and appointed the electoral colleges to assemble on the 5th July, and the next one to assemble on the 9th August, the anniversary of the King's accession. The interval was assiduously employed in every possible effort to gain a majority in the new legislature.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 208, 209; Louis Blanc, ii. 360, 364.

It was not without reason that the King was so solici-

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55. Disturbances in Paris.

April 15.

April 16.

April 17.

May 9.

May 13.

July 14.

July 30.

[2] Moniteur, May 24, July 15, July 31, 1831; Ann. Hist. xiv. 204, 207, 247, 250.

tous to obtain a Chamber which might support his Government, for the appearances in Paris were very threatening. The people were in that excitable, irritable state, when every little thing occasions a crowd, and every crowd becomes the cradle of a sedition. The trial of some young men, among others M. CAVAIGNAC, destined for celebrity in future times, for their conduct on occasion of the trial of the ex-ministers in December, and their acquittal by the jury amidst thunders of applause, gave rise to disturbances which continued several days, and were not put down till a large military force had been called out. The restoration of the colossal statue of Napoleon on the summit of the column in the Place Vendôme, by order of the King, next violently excited the Napoleonists, and gave rise to alarming demonstrations of enthusiasm by crowds surrounding the column, and putting garlands of *immortelles* on its pedestal. At length these crowds in the Place Vendôme became so serious that Government, with great good sense, stationed a company of *Pompiers* with fire-engines in the Place, who cooled the ardour of the Napoleonists by copious *effusions of water*, which at length dispersed the assemblages. A more serious source of discord was found in a dispute relative to the decorations which were to be given by the King to the heroes of the barricades, which were objected to as inscribed with the words, "*Donné par le Roi des Français,*" and accompanied by an oath of fidelity by the recipient to the reigning sovereign. The anniversary of the taking of the Bastile, on July 14, was made the pretext for large assemblages in Paris and several towns in the departments, which terminated in bloodshed. The humiliating condition of the King was evinced by his being obliged, a fortnight after, to sanction magnificent rejoicings in Paris, on occasion of the anniversary of the corresponding insurrection of the preceding year, which led to his own elevation to the throne.[1]

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Distrustful from these appearances of the capital, the King resolved to throw himself on the departments, and for this purpose he made two royal progresses—one into Normandy, one into Champagne. In the course of the first, he visited Rouen, Havre, Abbeville, and Amiens; of the second, Meaux, Château-Thierry, Chalons, Metz, Verdun, Luneville, Colmar, Strasbourg, Besançon, and Troyes. These, being the most revolutionary departments of France, were selected for the display of the popularity of the Citizen-King, and, upon the whole, he had no reason to complain of the reception which he met with. In some places, however, the sturdy republican spirit evinced itself without control, and the King was reminded, like his ancestor Clovis at Soissons, even by a private soldier, of the precarious tenure by which he held his authority. At Metz, a leading member of the municipality, in the course of his address to the King, insisted on the unanimity of the country on the abolition of the hereditary peerage, and the ardent wishes everywhere formed for the independence of the Poles. The King cut him short. "You speak to me of what you say all the municipal councils in France have proclaimed: you are mistaken; they have proclaimed nothing. It is no part of their duty to do so, nor to take any part in the deliberations on subjects of state policy; that duty belongs to the Chambers alone." M. Voirhaye, a commander of the National Guard at the same place, expressed similar sentiments. "The National Guard," said the King, "should not occupy itself with political questions." "Sire," replied M. Voirhaye, "it is not an advice which it gives, it is a wish which it expresses." "The National Guard," answered the King, "should form no wishes; the armed force never deliberates: you are not its organ. I will hear no more." These words, repeated in the columns of the *Moniteur*, were soon known over all France, and made an immense sensation.[1]

56. The King's progresses into Normandy and Champagne. May 18.

[1] Cap. v. 133, 135; Louis Blanc, ii. 364, 365.

But the King soon found that it is easier to raise up

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57. Unfavourable issue of the elections for the Crown.

than put down a revolution, and that the armed force which has overturned one government may think of overthrowing another. Notwithstanding the utmost pains taken by the Government, by circular letters to the prefects, and in every other imaginable way, to secure a majority for the government candidates, they generally experienced defeat. The lowering of the qualification to two hundred francs told with decisive effect upon the returns. The Royalists, who were very powerful in some departments, especially in the south and west, generally kept aloof and took no part in the elections, following an opinion, very common in such circumstances, that things must be worse before they are better, and that the only way to damp the ardour for revolutions is to let the people experience their effects. A great number of new deputies were elected; no less than two hundred and three members of the former Chamber were not found in the new. Nevertheless the majority of the new deputies were not absolute Republicans, but strong and ardent Liberals, thirsting for wealth, power, and distinction, and impressed with the idea that they could be obtained only by falling in with, and even anticipating, the public wishes. Among them were several celebrated men—M. Arago, M. Duvergier de Hauranne, M. Thiers, and M. Garnier Pagès. The Opposition had no acknowledged leader, but M. Odillon Barrot was the most ready orator and influential man among them. To follow out the Revolution of July, and establish a government in harmony with its spirit, was the prevailing feeling of the electoral colleges; and the first triumph which they desired over the Legitimists was the abolition of the hereditary peerage. So general was the feeling on this subject that it was made the subject of a distinct pledge to the electors from the great majority of the representatives.[1]

[1] Cap. v. 140, 141; Louis Blanc, ii. 367, 368; Ann. Hist. xiv. 219, 220.

The Chambers met on the 23d July. "Gentlemen," said the King, in a speech dictated by Casimir Périer, and read from his manuscript, "I am happy to find

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myself in the midst of you, and in the hall which witnessed my oaths. Penetrated by a sense of the duties which they have imposed upon me, I will always look for support in the national will, of which you are the constitutional organs; and I expect from you that cordial co-operation which can alone give my government the strength without which it will be unable to respond to the expectations of the nation. I have said, gentlemen, that henceforth the charter shall be a truth: what I have said has already been accomplished. The charter is nothing but a constitutional monarchy, with its conditions loyally maintained, its consequences frankly accepted. In calling me to the throne, France wished that royalty should become national: it did not intend it should be impotent. A government without force can never be suitable for a great nation. I have just traversed great part of France; the marks of affection I have received have deeply touched my heart; they are ever present to my thoughts. You will assist me in accomplishing the objects I have so much at heart. Order shall be protected, liberty guaranteed, the efforts of the factious confounded and repressed. Thence will arrive that confidence in the future which can alone secure the prosperity of the State. I know the extent of suffering which the commercial crisis in which the nation has been involved has produced: I am grieved at it, and admire the courage with which it has been borne. I hope it is drawing to its close, and that ere long the maintenance of order will restore the security necessary for the expenditure of capital, and restore to our commerce and industry its wonted activity."[1]

58. King's speech. July 23.

[1] Moniteur, July 24, 1831; Cap. v. 155, 156.

59. Defeat of the Government on the choice of President and Vice-President.

Notwithstanding the ardent wish thus expressed by the Sovereign for a strong Government, and the support of the majority of the Chamber, he soon found that he was not likely to obtain it. The crises on which support to the Government from the legislature and the nation is most required, are generally those when it is most

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resolutely withheld; for every one is then striving for himself, and self counsels coincidence with the majority. At the very first division for the choice of a President, the weakness of Government and the democratic temper of the Chamber became apparent. The candidate of the Government for the presidency was M. Girod de l'Ain, and M. Lafitte of the Opposition. The first had 171 votes, the second 168; so that M. Casimir Périer prevailed only by a majority of 3 votes. But the result was still more disheartening on the contests for the Vice-Presidencies; for M. Dupont de l'Eure and M. Béranger, the liberal candidates, had a majority of 10 over the government ones. The defeat of Ministers was now apparent, as Casimir Périer had always declared that he would only rule by means of a parliamentary majority, which, he thought, should be at least of 40 votes. He and M. Sébastiani, Baron Louis, and M. Montalivet accordingly the same day tendered their resignations to the King. To all appearance, a change of Ministry was inevitable, when it was prevented, and they were induced to resume their seats, by the intelligence which reached Paris by telegraph on the very next day, that *the Dutch troops had invaded Belgium.*[1]

[1] Moniteur, Aug. 4, 1831; Ann. Hist. xiv. 227, 229; Louis Blanc, ii. 418.

60. Affairs of Holland and Flanders.

To understand how this came about, it must be premised that the relative positions of Belgium and Holland had essentially changed during the nine months which had elapsed since the house of Nassau was precipitated from the throne at Brussels. Patriotic spirit, vigour of administration, wisdom of council, had done as much on the one side as tumult, selfishness, and disunion had effected on the other. There was no need for the intervention of a congress: a fair stage and no favour was all that the King of the Netherlands required to regain his lost dominions. Such had been the vigour of administration in Holland since the catastrophe occurred, that she had now sixty-eight thousand men on foot, of which four thousand eight hundred were cavalry, with

a hundred and fifty guns ready for the field, besides four sail of the line, and a large fleet of smaller vessels ready for sea. On the other hand, the preparations of the Belgians had been on paper and in words only. Such had been the stagnation of commerce, and the misery of the industrious classes in consequence of the revolution, that the collection of taxes in most places had become impossible. The provisional government at Brussels was without either money, men, or consideration. The assembly there decreed the formation of an armed force of a hundred thousand men, but there were not twenty-five thousand really present with the standards, and they were in the most miserable state, without magazines, equipments, or discipline. In addition to this, a strong party in the chief towns, particularly Antwerp, Ghent, Bruges, and Brussels, composed of the richest and most eminent citizens, were desirous of resuming the connection with Holland, and the King was in daily expectation of a counter-revolution to that effect, or an election of one of his sons as king of the Belgians.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 399, 400; Cap. v. 160, 162; Louis Blanc, ii. 418.

61. What the London congress should have done.

In these circumstances, what the principle of non-intervention required, and the five powers whose representatives were assembled at London should have done, if they had really been actuated by that principle, or influenced by a sense of justice, was very evident. They should simply have formed a cordon of troops round Holland and Flanders, and allowed them to fight it out. Considerations of the highest political importance, with a view to the maintenance of the balance of power in Europe, had suggested the formation of that united kingdom, and these considerations had only become the more pressing from the Revolution of 1830 in France, and the extreme violence with which the great majority there was now urging the Government to embrace the cause of the malcontents in all the adjacent countries, and adopt a system of general propagandism. Still these considerations did not authorise the armed inter-

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vention of the great powers; because, although they had all guaranteed the kingdom of the Netherlands to Frederick-William, that gave them a title to support him only against foreign aggression, not domestic revolt. But now the course of events had rendered the just course at the same time the wisest. Principle and expedience for once pointed in the same direction. The faith of treaties and the dictates of public morality alike prescribed non-intervention; and it at the same time restored the barrier of Europe against France, and preserved that which the victories of Marlborough had won, and those of Wellington had secured.

62. Views of Talleyrand and Lord Palmerston.

Obvious as these considerations were, and decisively as they would at any other time have spoken to any government of Great Britain, there were others which told with still more effect at the moment on the minds of the able statesmen who at that period directed the foreign affairs of France and England. Both these countries were then in a state of revolution, and foreign affairs were regarded in both, less with reference to the *future* interests of either country, than to their *present* bearing on the position of the party which had risen in each to the direction of government. M. Talleyrand was the representative of the Citizen-King, who had in a moment of public fervour, and by the aid of the popular party in Paris, dethroned his lawful sovereign, and now with difficulty restrained the loudly-expressed demand of the party to whom he owed his elevation, that France should lend its aid to the democratic party in all the adjoining states, and in particular support the revolutionary government recently established in Belgium. Lord Palmerston was the foreign secretary of a ministry in England which had recently overturned the long-established dominion of the Tories, and only now maintained its ground against them by having awakened and by keeping alive a burst of democratic fervour, second only

to that which had recently overturned the throne of Charles X. on the other side of the Channel.

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63. Reasons which led them to support the Belgians.

However obviously the ultimate and lasting interests of both countries might require the maintenance of the barrier of the Low Countries to prevent their collision, and however loudly the principles of non-intervention required an entire abstinence on either side from any interference in the quarrels of Holland and Belgium, yet it was evident that such a course would at the moment be perilous to the government at the head of both. The cabinet of Louis Philippe would never recover in France the discredit of having allowed the patriots of Belgium to be put down by the advanced guard of the Holy Alliance, and lost the opportunity of wresting from the Allies the inestimable barrier of the Flemish fortresses; the Whigs in England would have been seriously weakened in the estimation of their popular supporters at the critical moment of the Reform struggle, if they had looked tamely on while Frederick-William put down the insurrection in Belgium, and prevented the tricolor flag from waving at the mouth of the Scheldt. In a violent political crisis, considerations of party generally prevail over those of country; and thence the entire deviation which ensued in the policy of England from that which had been invariably pursued by its government for two hundred years.

64. Leopold of Saxe-Cobourg elected King of Belgium. June 1.

The leaders of the revolution in Belgium were well aware of the dangerous ground on which they stood. They knew that they were in a manner the advanced-work of revolution against Europe, and that Holland was the advanced work of Europe against them; and it was on the support of France and England that they looked for their only effectual support against the open or covert hostility of Russia and Prussia. No sooner, accordingly, did they receive Louis Philippe's refusal of the crown for the Duke de Nemours, than all shades

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of the liberal party concurred in offering it to Prince Leopold of Saxe-Cobourg, by whom it was, after some hesitation, accepted. This hesitation was produced by a doubt as to the extent of territory which was to belong to the new kingdom on the side of Limburg and Luxembourg, as his declinature of the crown of Greece had been occasioned by the exclusion of Candia from its limits. Having, however, received satisfactory assurances from the British government on this point, he accepted the proffered diadem, and soon after made a public entry with great éclat into Brussels. M. de Talleyrand had strongly supported the British government in its efforts to procure that nomination; for he foresaw in that nomination a termination of all discord between France and England on the subject, and the only real security for the new-born royalty of Louis Philippe against the now scarcely disguised hostility of the northern powers.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 400, 415; Cap. v. 165, 169.

65. Change which this election made on the views of Holland and Belgium.

But although the veteran diplomatist was undoubtedly right in supposing that the election of the widower of the Princess Charlotte, and the personal friend of the leading Whigs in England, would remove all jealousy on the part of its cabinet to the new arrangement in the Low Countries, yet it was very far from having the same effect on the relations of Holland and Belgium themselves; on the contrary, it much aggravated the causes of irritation between these two rival states. The Belgian congress, which was audacious in proportion to its weakness, and could with difficulty be brought to reason or a just sense of its situation by the threatened hostility of the five powers, no sooner found itself supported by England, from whom most hostility was to be apprehended, than it rose in its demands, and insisted upon the cession of Luxembourg and Limburg to the new kingdom. On the other hand, the King of Holland was determined to make no more concessions, and to bring the negotiations which appeared to be interminable to an end; he formally intimated to the Belgian govern-

June 1.

ment his acceptance of the conditions of separation between the two states, as fixed by the protocols of 20th and 27th January last, and that if the Belgian government did not intimate their adherence within five days, he would consider himself entitled to act for himself. In making this declaration, William was in secret much influenced by irritation at the election of Prince Leopold to the throne of Belgium. He had all along been supported by a strong party, composed of the most respectable, though not the most numerous citizens in Belgium; and it was not till the election of Leopold was declared that he lost the hope he had always entertained of the crown being tendered to one of his own family.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 414, 416; Cap. v. 167, 168; Louis Blanc, ii. 419, 420.

66. Change in the policy of Great Britain regarding Belgium.

The same election caused the feelings of the government which now ruled the destinies of Great Britain to undergo a still more decisive change towards him. England was now convulsed by the reform passion, and it was only by feeding it that the Whig Ministry could retain possession of the reins of power. As such, it naturally felt a secret leaning and partiality for a popular, and a distrust of a conservative power. Belgium was the advanced-work of the revolutionary, Holland of the legitimate monarchies. France was the protector of the former, Russia of the latter. This state of things—new in recent British history, though well known in the days of the Reformation—now began for the first time to influence the foreign policy of the country, and Holland was the first power which experienced the change. Leopold was a constitutional monarch; he was the *élève* of Great Britain, the personal friend of the existing Ministers, and they had placed him on the throne. In all these respects William of Holland was the very reverse: he stood on hereditary right; he was the *protegé* of the Holy Alliance, the pupil of Russia. Thus the ancient and long-established alliance with Holland insensibly turned, first into coldness, and ere long into hostility; while, on the other hand, sympathy of feeling and identity of party

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interest was rapidly converting the ancient jealousy of France into a feeling of cordial amity, which ere long terminated in alliance. Thence the immense importance of the political changes in Great Britain which were in progress at this time, and have occupied so large a portion of this history. They brought on not only an alteration in the internal constitution of Great Britain equivalent to a revolution, but an entire change in the alliances of Europe, and in the foreign policy of its principal monarchies.

67. Change in the language of England and France regarding Luxembourg.

Luxembourg was the point where this change in the foreign policy of Great Britain first appeared. It has been already mentioned that by article 2d of the Act of Separation between the two states, which had been sanctioned by all the powers, it had been stated that the province should belong to Holland, as part of the ancient patrimony of the house of Nassau.* But no sooner was the election of Leopold as King of Belgium determined on, than the British ministry, forgetting in the heat of party conflict alike the faith of treaties and the lasting interests of their country, passed over to the other side, and announced by a letter of Lord Ponsonby to the congress of Brussels, that, provided they submitted without reserve to the Conference, the latter would use their best endeavours to obtain the grand-duchy of Luxembourg for them by negotiation, and upon giving to Holland a suitable indemnity, and in the mean time protect them from any attack on the part of the German Confederation.† Justly alarmed at this declared inten-

* "Les limites de la Hollande comprendront tous les territoires, places, villes, et lieux qui appartenaient à la ci-dèvant République des provinces unies des Pays Bas en l'année 1790. La Belgique sera formée de tout le reste des territoires qui avaient reçu la dénomination du Royaume des Pays Bas dans les traités de 1815." Luxembourg and Limburg were part of the old patrimony of the house of Nassau, and never were part of Belgium at all.—*Protocole*, 20th Jan. 1831; *Ann. Hist.*, vol. xiv. p. 410.

† "Si la Belgique consent à se placer dans le cercle des états Européens, reconnaissant les traités énoncés, la conférence *l'aidera par une puissante médiation à obtenir le Duché de Luxembourg par un traité*, et moyennant une indemnité équitable; et, par des moyens assurés, la conférence préviendra toute

tion of despoiling him of part of his paternal inheritance on the part of the London conference, and anticipating nothing but coercion from the "powerful mediation" of such formidable mediators, the King of Holland lost no time in protesting solemnly against any such project being entertained, and appealing to the faith of treaties to maintain him in the possessions of his family, and the limits assigned to him by the mediating powers themselves.[1] *

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 412, 416; Cap. v. 167, 169; Louis Blanc, ii. 420, 421.

68. Progress of the negotiation, and secret treaty of France and England.

Without going into the tedious details of those negotiations, which continued without intermission for the next two months, and went the length of above fifty protocols, it is sufficient to observe that neither party abated in their demands, and it ere long became evident that a rupture had become unavoidable. The Belgian Assembly and King Leopold, in secret supported by England and France, insisted that negotiations should be begun between the two states for the purpose of severing the grand-duchy of Luxembourg from Holland, and annexing it to Belgium; while William, in secret supported by Russia and Prussia, as strenuously insisted that nothing remained to negotiate about, that he accepted absolutely and unconditionally the Act of Separation as it had been fixed by the five powers themselves, and declined all proposals of exchange or compromise. Aware that matters were coming to extremities, and that hostilities might ere long break out, England and France entered into a secret treaty, the purport of which was, that Holland and Belgium should be forcibly restrained

attaque militaire de la part de la Confédération Germanique pendant la négociation."—Lord PONSONBY *au Congrès de Bruxelles. Ann. Hist.* vol. xiv. p. 410.

* "Le Roi s'en tient à l'acte de séparation que les cinq puissances lui ont proposé, et qu'il a accepté sans réserve. L'article 2 de cet acte reconnaît expressément que le grand-duché appartient à la maison de Nassau. Il est donc difficile à concevoir qu'il pourrait être question *d'une négociation sur cette souveraineté*, laquelle même par l'adhésion conditionnelle de la Belgique aux bases de séparation ne laisserait pas de rencontrer les plus grandes difficultés, attendu que le grand-duché a remplacé, pour le roi et les princes de sa maison, ses états héréditaires, et qu'il est d'une valeur inappréciable à ses yeux." —*Le Roi au Congrès à Londres*, June 5, 1831. *Ann. Hist.* vol. xiv. p. 416.

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from coming to blows, and that for this purpose an English fleet should be cautiously collected in the Downs, ready to cross over to the mouth of the Scheldt, and a French army of 40,000 assembled on the Flemish frontier. M. Talleyrand said, in reference to this treaty, that "England and France were two gendarmes who forcibly intervened to prevent a duel;" and had such been the character of the intervention, there could be no question of its propriety or justice. But he forgot to add that the intervention assumed a very different character when the gendarmes interfered to enable one of the combatants with impunity to rob the other.[1]

[1] Treaty, June 16, 1831; Cap. v. 170, 171; Ann. Hist. xiv. 416, 417.

69. The five powers deviate from the Act of Separation, and the King of Holland declares war. Aug. 4. June 26.

The pretensions of the Belgian Assembly rose in proportion as England and France manifested a disposition in their favour; and at length they arrived at such a point that they declared they would *not be bound* by the Act of Separation of the two states. Upon this the French and English ministers, Lord Ponsonby and General Belliard, left Brussels. Negotiations, however, still went on in London, and Leopold formally accepted the crown, on condition of the conference giving him the advantages stipulated in eighteen articles, which differed widely from the original Act of Separation, and gave Belgium much more than had belonged to it in 1790, besides leaving the question of Luxembourg open. To this the conference in London agreed, deeming the settlement of the Belgian question by placing Leopold on the throne, an advantage so great that it was worth purchasing by the sacrifice of some of the rights of Holland. When this resolution was notified to the King of Holland, he declined to accept it, in calm but dignified terms; and orders were given to the troops on the frontier to move forward, while General Chassé announced the termination of the armistice, concluded on the 5th of November preceding, to the Belgian governor of Antwerp.[2] *

[2] Cap. v. 129, 172, 174; Ann. Hist. xiv. 432, 433; Louis Blanc, ii. 420; see 18 Articles in Ann. Hist. xiv. 137, App.

* "Les 18 articles que vos Excellences m'ont fait l'honneur de m'adresser, et qui sont proposés aux deux parties comme un base de préliminaires d'un

70. Commencement of hostilities, and position and forces on the two sides.

The Dutch army, when it thus threw down the gauntlet to the greatest powers of Europe, was in a very efficient state, and, considering the resources of the country by which it was maintained, surprisingly numerous. It consisted of 70,000 men, recruited from the veteran soldiers of Prussia, Germany, and Switzerland, attracted to the standard of King William by the ample pay offered by the Dutch government, of whom 40,000 were stationed on the frontier in three corps: one under General Van Gheen, which had orders to move upon Antwerp from Breda; the second, under General Georges, was in front of Maestricht; while the third was stationed between them, and was to advance upon Brussels. On the other side, the Belgians had collected 12,000 men, who were dignified by the name of the Army of the Scheldt, at Malines, which was commanded by Leopold in person; while another corps, 10,000 strong, under General Daine, was stationed between Maestricht and Hasselt. The composition of these troops, however, was not such as to inspire any hope that they would be able to withstand the shock of the veteran troops who were collected round the Dutch standards, for they were nearly all raw levies, chiefly composed of the rabble of towns,[1] ill equipped

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 433, 435; Cap. v. 182, 185; Louis Blanc, ii. 420.

traité de paix, changent toutes les combinaisons. Le contenu inattendu de cette pièce a d'autant plus douloureusement affecté sa Majesté, que, d'après ce qui en résulte, la Conférence n'a pas jugé devoir accueillir une seule des observations multipliées produites par les plénipotentiaires des Pays Bas. La plupart de ces articles semblent le résultat d'un concert avec ceux qui exercent le pouvoir en Belgique. Mais sans s'arrêter à cette apparence, il est de fait qu'ils furent simultanément communiqués à la Belgique et à la Hollande, et que principalement on ne consulta point sur leur contenu, le Cabinet de la Haye, comme sa Majesté, avait bien droit de l'attendre. A l'exemple des souverains les plus puissans, il pourra céder à la nécessité en abandonnant à leur sort ceux de ses sujets qui se sont soustraits à son autorité, mais jamais il ne leur sacrifiera les droits de la Hollande. Or, un examen réfléchi l'ayant convaincu que les articles préliminaires livreraient à la merci de l'insurrection les intérêts les plus chers de la patrie, il ne peut dès-lors les accepter, et doit derechef réclamer de la part des cinq puissances, comme j'ai l'honneur de le faire en son nom. Désormais c'est une querelle, un débat entre la Hollande et la Belgique, états indépendants et séparés; il a ainsi le droit de paix et de guerre, sans qu'il y ait nécessité d'une intervention des puissances."—*Protestation du Roi Guillaume*, 26th June 1831; CAPEFIGUE, vol. v. pp. 173, 175.

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and worse disciplined, and totally destitute of the firmness and confidence in each other requisite to success in the field.

71. Total defeat of the Belgians. Aug. 8, 10, and 22.

The corps of the Prince of Orange crossed the frontier on the 5th, and made itself master of Diest without opposition; from whence, advancing on its left towards Haarlem, and on its right to Sichem, it interposed between the enemy's corps at Malines and on the Meuse, and rendered their junction impracticable. This was in itself a great advantage, which would probably be decisive of the issue of the campaign; but it was rendered still more important by what soon after occurred with the Dutch left on the Meuse. The Belgians were there attacked on the road between Hasselt and Tongres by General Georges' corps, and routed with such facility that the affair could not be called a battle. At the first shot the Belgian infantry took to flight; their artillery, in the confusion, fired on their own men, taking them for enemies; and the cavalry completed the disorder by wheeling about and trampling under foot their own foot-soldiers in the general flight. In frightful confusion the whole army fled to Liege, with the loss of its whole artillery, caissons, and baggage, leaving Brussels uncovered to its fate. That city was now at the mercy of the Dutch troops; for on the very day when this disaster happened to the army of the Meuse, Leopold, finding his right entirely uncovered, retired towards Louvain, and took up an intrenched position in front of that town. There he was followed by the Prince of Orange, attacked, and routed with so much facility that it was with great difficulty he escaped, after losing all his artillery, into Louvain, where he was shut up next day by the victorious Dutch. Leopold himself behaved with great gallantry in this affair, but he could not communicate his own spirit to the revolutionary rabble whom he commanded.[1] In these disastrous circumstances, he wrote an urgent letter to Marshal Gérard, who commanded the French army on the frontier, to hasten his

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 434, 435; Cap. v. 185, 186; Louis Blanc, ii. 422.

march; and a limit was thus put to the progress of the Prince of Orange, when he was at the gates of Brussels, held his rival blockaded in a town which could not hold out three days, and when, according to the republican journalists, "Belgium was within a hair's-breadth of destruction." *

72. Intervention of the French army in Flanders.

But it was no part of the policy of France to allow this opportunity of re-establishing their influence in Flanders to be lost, or of the new-born liberal policy of England to interfere with such an extension of the power of their ancient rival. On the contrary, the governments of both countries leant to the new-born revolutionary State, and regarded with jealousy the pretensions of William, the protegé of the Holy Alliance, and the advanced guard of the legitimist sovereigns. No sooner, accordingly, was the intelligence of the crossing the frontier by the Prince of Orange received in Paris and London, than orders were sent by the two governments for their respective forces to advance. The English fleet made sail from the Downs for the mouth of the Scheldt; the French army received orders instantly to cross the frontier and march upon Louvain and Brussels. With transports of joy the French troops began their march, the soldiers chaunting songs of victory; they were marching against the Holy Alliance; they were recommencing the career of the Grand Army; they were going to level the Lion of Waterloo! Forty thousand men, in the highest state of discipline and equipment, crossed the frontier on the 9th, and on the 12th the vanguard entered Brussels at the very moment when the victory of Louvain had opened to the Prince of Orange the gates of the capital.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 435, 436; Cap. v. 137, 190.

73. Armistice, and withdrawal of the French troops. Aug. 13.

Fortunately for the peace of Europe, the good sense of the King of Holland, which was equal to his resolution, led him to appreciate the dangers of his situation if he persisted any farther in hostilities. He had received a communication, signed by the ambassadors of all the five

* "La Belgique était à deux doigts de sa perte."—L. BLANC, vol. ii. p. 422.

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powers, to the effect that they were unanimously resolved to put a period to hostilities so eminently hazardous to the peace of Europe, and that France and England, in interposing to prevent them, acted in the general interest,

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and with the concurrence of all the powers. In effect, a protocol was signed on the 6th, which regulated the intervention, declared that the Conference was satisfied that the French and English intervention was done in the intent and in order to preserve the peace of Europe, and provided that they should not cross the frontier of Old Holland, and neither invest Maestricht nor Venloo, and that the French troops should retire within the French frontier, and the English fleet to the Downs, as soon as hostilities ceased between the Dutch and Belgians. As soon as he was informed of this resolution on the part of the five powers, William despatched orders to the Prince of Orange to stop hostilities, and retire within the frontiers of Holland.

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The order reached him at Louvain, on the 13th, and he immediately concluded a convention with General Belliard, who commanded the French advanced guard, in virtue of which the Dutch troops withdrew within their own frontier, and the French, after some delay, retired to their own country, without having had the satisfaction of destroying the Lion of Waterloo in the course of their expedition.[1]

[1] Protocol, No. 31, Aug. 6, 1831; Ann. Hist. xiv. 147, App.; Cap. v. 189, 190.

74. Renewed conferences, and reasons which made the northern powers acquiesce in them.

Nothing but the preponderance of France and England, from their united policy and geographical position, so near the seat of hostilities, and the danger to which they themselves were exposed by the still doubtful contest on the shores of the Vistula which will immediately be recounted, could have induced the Northern Powers to look quietly on, while the western potentates took upon themselves, in this manner, to arrange the affairs of Flanders at their own pleasure, and keep up by force the revolutionary state of Belgium, at the very moment when it had in reality fallen under the restored dominion of its lawful sovereign. In truth, the powers engaged in the

Conference were as much divided on the subject, notwithstanding their apparent unanimity, as Holland and Belgium; and it was with great difficulty a rupture was prevented between them. A spark would then have lighted the flame of a general war; and had the affair of Poland been settled three months earlier than it actually was, the French invasion of Belgium would have proved that spark. But the terror of a general war, for which they were wholly unprepared, and an undefined dread of revolt in their own dominions, if a strife of opinion were openly waged in Europe, prevailed over these views, and a sort of tacit agreement took place between the five powers, to the effect that France and England should be permitted to arrange at pleasure the affairs of Belgium, provided they allowed Russia and Prussia at will to settle those of Poland.

75. Great advantages gained by Holland by this irruption.

But although hostilities were thus stopped in Flanders, and William was prevented from recovering the lost part of his dominions, at the very time when he had decisively defeated the rebels in them, yet he gained much, both in material advantage and moral influence, by the brief passage at arms which had taken place. Short as the period of hostilities had been, it had proved both the vigour, patriotism, and unanimity of Holland, and the weakness, disunion, and inefficiency of Belgium. It was now demonstrated beyond all dispute, that the Belgian revolution had been the work merely of the heated democrats of a few great towns, and had no foundation in the solid sense or settled wishes of the great majority of the inhabitants of Flanders; for the revolutionary state, with four millions of inhabitants, had been vanquished in a few days by the conservative with two millions and a half. It was now evident to all the world that a popular dynasty could not stand of itself in Flanders, and that, if not propped up by the adjoining liberal Governments of France and England, it would at once fall to the ground. These conclusions flowed so evidently

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from what had occurred, that they soon came not only to affect general opinion over Europe, but materially to influence the views of the London Conference. After mature deliberation, the ambassadors of the five powers presented to the Kings of Holland and Belgium a project of a treaty for the separation of the two states, which they described in the accompanying letter as "final and irrevocable;" but containing terms far more favourable to Holland than the former one of eighteen articles, which had been rejected. By this proposed treaty, the grand-duchy of Luxembourg was to be divided between the two powers, but with the fortress of Luxembourg belonging to the King of Holland, as grand-duke of that duchy, he receiving a portion of Limburg in indemnity for the part ceded; the district of Maestricht was also partitioned, but with the fortress of that name remaining to Holland; and the common debt of the kingdom of the Netherlands was to be apportioned on the footing of 8,400,000 florins to be annually paid by the Belgians, and 5,050,000 to be provided for by the Dutch government. This treaty was not implicitly adopted by either of the states concerned; fresh negotiations took place, and a memorable siege ensued, to be recounted in the next volume, before the rival pretensions of Holland and Belgium were finally adjusted.[1]

[1] Treaty, Oct. 13, 1831; Ann. Hist. xiv. 145, 150; Louis Blanc, ii. 135, 186.

76. Forcible intervention of the French at Lisbon.

If the effects of the new-born alliance of the liberal governments of France and England were proclaimed to the world in the affairs of Flanders in this year, they were not less clearly evinced in an event which took place, inconsiderable in itself, but very significant of accomplished change, at the mouth of the Tagus. Some French subjects had grounds of complaint against the government at Lisbon, and some abusive articles had appeared in the Portuguese newspapers against the French monarch. These grievances, which would have been the fit subject of pacific remonstrance and negotiation, were taken up by the Cabinet of Louis Philippe as the subject of national

quarrel; and they resolved to demand reparation at the cannon's mouth. It was indispensable, however, to obtain the assent of the British government to any armed intervention in the Tagus; but this was without difficulty obtained, the English government and people being so completely absorbed in the Reform contest, that foreign affairs, even when of the most pressing kind, and touching on the most interesting recollections, excited scarcely any attention. The consent of the British cabinet to the hostile demonstration being thus obtained, the French government fitted out a fleet of six ships of the line and three frigates, under the command of Admiral Roussin, which forthwith set sail, and arrived on the 8th July at the mouth of the Tagus.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 552, 555; Cap. v. 226, 227.

77. The French compel the submission of the Portuguese government. July 11.

The first step of Admiral Roussin was to send a flag of truce ashore, with a statement of his demands, which were,—the dismissal of the captain of the Portuguese frigate which had captured a French packet-boat, the St Helena; a compensation in money for several proprietors who had suffered during the blockade of Terceira by the Royalist fleet; and the dismissal of all the magistrates, who were said to have violated the privileges of French subjects. These terms not having been complied with, the French squadron entered the Tagus, passed, without sustaining almost any damage, the batteries of Fort Belem, on which the vessels, in moving up, opened a heavy fire, and, continuing their victorious course, anchored abreast of the royal palace. Nothing now remained to the Portuguese government but submission. The conditions, so far as the individuals claiming damages were concerned, were at once complied with, and any questions of a general nature referred to the Conference at London; but the Portuguese fleet was carried off in triumph to Brest. This vigorous demonstration was not of any very material importance in itself; but it assumed great magnitude from the indication it afforded of the entire change in the policy of Great Britain, which the acces-

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sion of the Whig party to power had occasioned. Don Miguel had appealed to the British government for protection, when the attack was impending, and been refused. Europe was confounded at beholding England calmly abandoning its ancient ally to the hostile attacks of its former rival; and although the English people, engrossed with the Reform struggle, and incapable of taking in more than one idea at a time, paid little attention to the subject, there were many thoughtful persons in England who concurred in the mournful words of the Duke of Wellington, in the House of Peers, "that it went to his heart to see the French dictate peace under the walls of Lisbon."[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 554, 557; Ann. Reg. 1831, 445, 446; Cap. v. 228, 230; Louis Blanc, ii. 395, 397.

78. Vehement excitement in Paris from these events.

Although these vigorous demonstrations of French power in Flanders and in the Tagus went far to restore the credit of France in the eyes of foreign nations, and beyond all question saved the ministry of Casimir Périer from the shipwreck with which it was threatened at the very commencement of the session, yet in the end they rather increased than lessened the difficulties of Government. The enthusiasm of the people at these successful foreign interventions became speedily such that it was altogether ungovernable. The spirit of propagandism into which democratic fervour, when successful, invariably runs, became so violent that nothing within the power of Government could satisfy it. The Parisian journals would gladly have faced the hostility of the whole world for the spread of their principles. They loudly demanded the immediate march of one army into Italy, to excite the Italian patriots; another into Belgium, to support the cause of insurrection in Flanders; and a third into Germany, to make its way through the three hundred thousand armed men of the Confederation to the shores of the Vistula, and lend its aid to the heroic and labouring Poles. Secure of the support, or at least the forbearance, of England, they felt confident against the world in arms. Such was the excitement produced by these events, that for

three weeks they exclusively occupied the attention of the Chamber, to the entire stoppage of all other business. The danger of the crisis, and the difficulties of the Government, will be best appreciated by recapitulating what, in a thousand different forms, and with the utmost violence of language, was advanced on either side.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 271, 286.

79. Argument of the Opposition on foreign affairs.

The debates began in the Chamber on the 9th August, and lasted, without intermission, for three weeks. They elicited on both sides the whole oratorical talent of France, and were characterised from the very first by uncommon violence of language. "We accuse you," said M. Bignon, General Lamarque, Marshal Clausel, and M. Mauguin, "of having compromised the interest of France, which lies in its honour, and the interests of humanity, which are centred in the greatness of France. Recollect what we were a year ago, and reflect on what we now are. How vast was the prestige with which we were then surrounded! In the midst of nations astounded, and kings struck with terror, we had grasped again, and for far nobler purposes than he wielded it, the sceptre of Napoleon. Never was situation so dazzling as ours then was, and we had no need to disturb the world to attain our object, for it lay at our mercy. Now, what can we do?—what influence do we possess in Europe? To know how to assist when you are strong is the mark of a wise moderation; but to tolerate injustice when you are strong, is the distinctive mark of pusillanimity. Look around you, and see what you have permitted! In Italy the Austrians trampling a noble people under foot, without any other title than that of the strongest; the Conference in London cutting asunder nationalities, without regard either to traditions, interests, or affections, at the dictation of four kings; the Russians proceeding to exterminate a generous people—to punish them for having found their tyranny intolerable. These are your works. This you have permitted, in this you have concurred. Everywhere around you you have allowed the rude

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empire of force to be re-established, to our eternal disgrace, and the not less durable misfortune of those who loved us, who relied on our support, and who were betrayed.

80. Continued.

"Boast not of your interventions; they are not so many titles of honour, but badges of servitude. You have demanded the retirement of the Austrians from Italy in March, and when did you obtain it? In July, when their work was done, the patriots dispersed and destroyed, your own influence in the peninsula lost. You have intervened in Belgium, and in what character, and at whose dictation? Not as the apostles of freedom, not as the pioneers of civilisation, but as the gendarmerie of the Holy Alliance, to carry into execution the dictates of the London Conference, to place the sovereign of England's choice on the throne of Flanders. You might have had that beautiful country as you might have had the fields of Lombardy, and its inhabitants panted for a reunion with you, but you rejected their advances for fear of giving umbrage to England! Umbrage to England! It was not thus that our fathers felt: there was no terror of England then. If these are the fruits of the English alliance, better, far better, to brave at once its hostility. There is little cause for congratulation on the expedition to Lisbon, how honourable soever to those engaged in it. We went there, not of our own free will, but by the license of England, to avenge her causes of complaint more than our own,—to displace a sovereign whom she deems it for her interest not to recognise. Such is the degradation to which we have been brought by the English alliance and the policy of Ministers, that the cabinet of St James's has no longer any need to get out fleets or armies of its own to avenge its wrongs or carry into execution its decisions; it has only to issue its mandates from London, and the fleets and armies of France become the instruments of its vengeance—the ministers of its will.

1831. 81. Concluded.

"We are always told we must await the decisions of a congress, the decisions of the Conference. Why a congress, why a conference? What is the need of a conference after the insurrection at Brussels—of a congress after the revolution at Warsaw? Had you at once recognised the nationality of Poland, what effect would it have produced on the banks of the Vistula? Lithuania, Podolia, Volhynia would immediately have been in arms; Gallicia and Hungary would have responded to the cry; a word would have disarmed Russia and Austria, re-established the balance of power, and restored France to its proper rank and lead in Europe. What could the Continental powers have done in presence of such a decided policy? Austria would have found its Poland in Italy, Prussia in the Rhenish provinces, England in Ireland. Driven back into their deserts by the heroic armies of the Sarmatians, the Muscovites would have ceased to be any longer formidable to the liberties of Europe—the independence of nations. Whereas the result of your timorous policy has been, that England has disposed of the crown of Belgium, which was laid at your feet; that Austria has established her supremacy in Italy; and Russia has found in the treacherous neutrality of Austria, the open support of Prussia, the means of extinguishing the last remnants of Polish nationality." [1]

1 Moniteur, Aug. 7-10, 1831; Ann. Hist. xiv. 219, 253; Louis Blanc, ii. 428, 430.

82. Answer of Ministers.

Strong as these arguments were, and powerfully as they spoke to the national and patriotic feelings which are ever springing up in the breasts of the French people, they were met on the part of Government by others, if not equally heart-stirring to the feelings, perhaps more convincing to the reason. "What," said M. Casimir Périer, M. Guizot, M. Thiers, and General Sébastiani, "are the grievances of which the Opposition complain? Born of a tempest calculated to drive nations into chaos, the French government has sought to appease everything around itself and in itself. Is there nothing grand in that lofty moderation? Was it blamable, because to the

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savage pleasure of overturning the world it preferred the glorious title of saving it at once from the double scourge of democracy and conquest? We are reproached for having abandoned Belgium to the English, Italy to the Austrians, Poland to the Russians. Vain and declamatory reproaches! We have done all in Italy which could reasonably be expected. The ministry of the 13th March (Casimir Périer), on arriving at the helm, found the Austrian army in the Roman States, the sad bequest of the weakness of the preceding cabinet. It demanded, it obtained their evacuation by the Austrian troops. What more could be expected of it? If our frontiers have not been advanced to the Rhine—if Flanders has not been incorporated with our dominions—if the King, doing violence to his family affections, has refused the crown proffered to his son,—it was because considerations of the highest political gravity were opposed to such projects of national or family aggrandisement. Was it expedient, for no other object but aggrandisement, to light up in Europe the flames of an immense conflagration? Was it advisable, in the hope of a doubtful conquest, to arm against us the English people, that powerful ally which has done so much to establish the throne of the Revolution? Would it have been wise to threaten the European nations with the revival of our ambition, which for fifteen long years kept them in agony and humiliation? Was France degraded because she showed herself at once formidable and disinterested?

83. Continued.

"No one can admire more than we do the heroic valour of the Poles, and be filled with a warmer commiseration for their undeserved fate; but the question is not what all must feel, but what any could have done? Separated from us by a breadth of four hundred leagues, inhabited by neutral and powerful nations, our geographical position condemned us to a mournful and sterile sympathy. To have marched to their succour would have

been to have resumed, at the point where they began to become fatal, the gigantic enterprises of Napoleon. And what would be the object gained, supposing it successful? To force Austria and Prussia, in their own defence, to conclude a close alliance with Russia, that our troops, on arriving at Warsaw, might find nothing but a desert and ashes. Napoleon himself at Tilsit was unequal to the task of restoring Poland, though he was at the head of five hundred thousand invincible soldiers. Could the ministers of 1831 have undertaken with impunity that which Napoleon, with his gigantic forces, failed in accomplishing, possessing as they did a much inferior army, for the most part composed of mere conscripts? To have *recognised* the independence of Poland when we could not support it, would have been an idle rodomontade, alike evincing the weakness of the one country and the impotence of the other.

84. Concluded.

"Let us not deceive ourselves, therefore, or be led away by vain declamation. Government has done all that was in its power to do for the Poles, when it offered its own mediation, and invited that of the other powers. It is time now for the Opposition to explain themselves. What do they really desire; what would they be at? Is a universal war—a war for life or death—the object of their desires? If so, they had better announce at once that the question is no longer between war and peace, but between war and liberty, for no one supposes that freedom can take root or flourish amidst the dire crash of war. Combats and battles abroad induce at home silence and repose: despotism is the counterpart of victory. Napoleon proved it; and before his time the Convention had proved it by deeds which will never be effaced from the memory of man. 'Have you concluded an agreement with victory?' was once asked in that terrible assembly. 'No,' was the reply of Bazire, 'but we have made a compact with death.'[1] Death soon came to claim performance of the promise: a year had not elapsed when the

[1] Louis Blanc, ii. 424, 426; Moniteur, Aug. 14, 1831; Ann. Hist. xiv. 237, 250.

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head of Bazire fell from the scaffold. If the Opposition does not grow pale at the employment of such resources, and the mere memory of these terrible examples, let them at least have the courage to avow it."

85. Violent scene in the Chamber on the debate on Poland.

Matters were brought to a perfect climax in the Chamber by a proposition of M. Bignon to insert in the address the words—"In the touching words of your Majesty regarding the misfortunes of Poland, the Chamber fondly hopes to find a '*certainty*' that the nationality of Poland shall not expire." M. Bodin, on the part of Ministers, contended that the words "*firm hope*" should be used instead. Such was the enthusiasm excited by this interesting topic, that at the words of General Lamarque, "Let us save Poland!" the whole Assembly rose like one man, and was proceeding, amidst loud acclamations, to adopt M. Bignon's motion, when Casimir Périer, foaming with rage, and quivering with emotion, rushed into the tribune, and insisted to be heard. The cry of "Spoke, spoke! order, order!" arose on all sides, and he could not make himself heard. Still standing in the tribune, and making frantic gesticulations, amidst a din which rendered any voice inaudible, the minister contended for the privilege of being heard. Upon this a frightful tumult arose, some contending that he should be heard, others that he should not,—all with equal violence. Soon the whole Assembly, galleries and all, were on their feet, shouting and gesticulating in the most tumultuous manner; and at length the President, after in vain trying to restore order by ringing his bell, covered himself, and the Chamber broke up in an indescribable state of agitation.[1]*

[1] Moniteur, Aug. 16, 1831; Louis Blanc, ii. 453, 454; Cap. v. 306, 307.

Great as was the excitement which these debates in the Chambers on the subject of Poland occasioned, it was

* In one of these violent debates, General Sébastiani, addressing General Lamarque, said, "C'est faux; vous en avez menti." These words led to a hostile meeting between the two generals, which happily terminated in no serious result. It is remarkable how often military and naval men, so cool in the field of battle or the quarterdeck, lose their temper, and become ungovern-

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as nothing to that which took place when the intelligence of the fall of Warsaw, to be recounted in the next chapter, arrived. It was on the 15th September that the mournful intelligence arrived in Paris, and the grief and excitement was so intense that it seemed a question whether it would not prove fatal to the new-born dynasty. It exceeded even that felt at the taking of Paris in 1814, or the battle of Waterloo in the year after; for national humiliation was then softened by a sense of delivery from evil, but here it was aggravated by the extinction of hope. The public excitement was wound up to the highest point by an imprudent and ill-timed expression of General Sébastiani, in announcing the mournful intelligence on the 16th in the Chamber of Deputies—"Order reigns in Warsaw;" and again, on the 19th, when he said, "Poland will never rise from its ashes if France is wise." Such was the excitement produced by these words, that Casimir Périer and General Sébastiani were assailed by a furious mob when entering the hotel of the minister-of-war in the Place Vendôme, and narrowly escaped with their lives. So universal was the grief, so passionate its expression, that the *theatres were all closed*,—a thing which had not occurred in the worst days of Robespierre or the Convention. For four days Paris continued in a state of stupor and prostration, to which nothing had been seen comparable in any former period of its history; and the public sorrow, as that of an individual, at length wore itself out by excessive indulgence.[1] The intensity of emotion evinced by the people on this occasion proved that it was not mere sympathy with a foreign state which agitated them, but an interest nearer home which was the cause of the excitement, and that the republican historian spoke the voice of millions when he said, "The

86. Vehement excitement in Paris on the fall of Warsaw, Sept. 15.

[1] Louis Blanc, ii. 473, 484; Cap. v. 339, 346; Ann. Hist. xiv. 272, 277; Moniteur, Sept. 17, 1831.

able in debate. It is that weakness which makes them in general incapable of ruling pacific assemblies. Accustomed to command, they cannot brook contradiction or resistance; and they too often forget that, in civil conflicts, the influence exercised is in general in the inverse ratio of the temper displayed.—See *Ann. Hist.*, vol. xiv. p. 249; *Chron.* p. 257; CAPEFIGUE, vol. v. p. 343.

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fall of Warsaw and the sterile effervescence in Paris completed the ruin of the revolutionary principle in Europe."

87. Bloody law against the Bourbons.

In the midst of these violent storms and altercations the ministry of Casimir Périer not only stood its ground, but sensibly acquired strength,—the evident necessity of supporting Government in the critical circumstances in which the country, both externally and internally, was placed, prevailing over the known democratic feeling of the majority of the Chamber. But at the same time the republican feeling, which had swayed the greater part of the elections, appeared in various domestic acts of the legislature. The majority in the Chamber, by the smallest possible number, was Liberal,* and their hostility to the Crown was evinced in two important subjects. The first was on the civil list for the Crown, which amounted to 18,000,000 francs (£720,000), and did not pass without the most violent opposition. The second was an amendment brought forward by M. de Bricqueville on the law for the banishment of the Bourbons, which, from having not been brought forward in time, had not passed the Peers in the last session, though it had been carried by a large majority in the Deputies; and it was now proposed, as an amendment, that the penalty of DEATH should be pronounced against any member of the elder Bourbon family who should set foot on the French territory.[1] This sanguinary law, worthy of the worst days of the Convention, was voted almost unanimously, to the extent of being sent to committee; M. Berryer and M. de Chartroun alone opposed it.

Sept. 19. 1 Ann. Hist. xiv. 338, 343; Moniteur, Sept. 20, 1831.

* STATE OF PARTIES IN THE NEW CHAMBER.

| | Ministerial. | Opposition. |
|---|---|---|
| Old members, | 145 | 150 |
| New do., | 84 | 80 |
| | 229 | 230 |

A majority of ONE for the Opposition—the same as brought on the French Revolution, and the Reform Bill in England.—See CAPEFIGUE, vol. v. p. 278.

But the committee rejected the capital sanction, and reported that the family of Napoleon should be included in the decree of banishment. The discussion on the report came on on 15th November, and gave rise to some very striking observations on both sides.

83. Speech of M. Pagès against the law. Nov. 15.

"There is but one measure," said M. Pagès, "which really suits the dignity of our situation, and may signalise it in the eyes of Europe. Do not try to inspire fear; that only betrays fear in yourselves. Pass to the order of the day: as to the five laws against the elder branch of the house of Bourbon, repeal alike the law of 1816 against the family of Napoleon, and prove to all the world by that lofty measure of prudence and courage that you labour under no apprehension, that you despise vain words and criminal enterprises, and that you know that no one can ascend the throne of France but by the will of the French. France, say the courtiers, is renowned among nations by its loyalty to its sovereign; but history tells a different tale; and truth gives the lie to flattery. It was by the assassination of the last of the Valois that the first Bourbon ascended the throne. Henry IV. died cruelly assassinated. During their respective minorities, Louis XIII. and Louis XIV. found with difficulty a shelter for their heads; the dagger of an assassin pierced the breast of Louis XV.; Louis XVI. died on the scaffold; Louis XVII. wasted away in chains. There is Bourbon blood to be seen in the fosse of Vincennes; its stains are visible on the steps of the Opera. Louis XVIII. has been twice proscribed; Charles X. has three times set out on the path of exile. Is it in a country which so often has brought before its eyes the miseries of royalty that it is allowable, under a monarchical government, to add to that load of oppression, and to inscribe deliberately in its statute-book a tyranny which has hitherto been found only in the dagger of the assassin, or the madness of the people?"[1]

[1] Moniteur, Nov. 16, 1831; Ann. Hist. xiv. 344.

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Striking speech of M. de Martignac, which causes the rejection of the clause.

Notwithstanding the historic truth and generous eloquence of these words, such was the terror inspired by the prospect of a civil war in La Vendée, lighted up by the threatened descent of the Duchess de Berri, that it is more than doubtful whether the sanguinary clause would not have been replaced by a vote of the Chamber in the law, had it not been for a noble and most moving appeal of M. de Martignac. This able and estimable statesman, who had tried in vain to check the perilous career of Charles X., immediately before the accession of the Polignac administration, had risen from the bed of sickness to oppose the motion, and spoke now, in a feeble and faltering voice, for the last time in the Assembly. "Gentlemen," said he, "banishment is in our law a punishment for infamous offences, pronounced by the judge after a mature examination of the evidence; and it is now proposed to declare it in advance against entire generations, without a trial, without evidence, without knowing even whom you are condemning! One of your orators has lately said from the tribune, 'In France proscription absolves.' That profound and just sentiment condemns the amendment. Should a pretender arrive in France, the Government will immediately be warned of the danger which the public security will run, and the risk will be prevented. But if a proscribed person, condemned beforehand, arrives on your shores, where will you find a man who will clap the executioner on the shoulder, and say to him, 'Look at that royal head; get it identified, and cause it to fall?' When I had the misfortune to be minister, a proscribed regicide appeared on the territory of France. The minister, informed of his appearance, so far from causing him to be arrested, hastened to provide for his retreat. He was an old man, and he was nursed, for he was sick; he received succour, for he had need of it; he was conducted, with the respect due to his age and misfortunes, to the frontier. I rendered an

account of what I had done, and it was approved of, as I know I should be by you to-day."—"Yes! yes!" broke from all parts of the Assembly. "What, then," he added, "would have been the case if the penalty had been death? I believe, in truth, I would not have spoken of it. Let one of the proscribed, whom the amendment submitted to the Chamber proposes to punish with death, return to France, to seek an asylum there; let him knock at the door even of the mover of the amendment; let him give his name and come in, and I will engage beforehand for his security." The effect of this appeal was irresistible among a people so accessible to the generous sentiments as the French. Profoundly moved, the whole Assembly rose as one man; and, amidst universal acclamations, the amendment, proposing the capital sanction, was withdrawn, and the law passed as proposed by the committee, which bore, "The elder branch of the Bourbons is banished for ever from France."[1]

[1] Moniteur, Nov. 20, 1831; Ann. Hist. xiv. 345, 346; Louis Blanc, iii. 45, 46, 47.

90. Question of the abolition of the hereditary peerage.

These incidental discussions, however, were all preliminary merely to the grand question of the session, which was the ABOLITION OF THE HEREDITARY PEERAGE. This was so emphatically the question of the day, that it might be said without exaggeration that the mission of the new Chamber was to destroy the peerage, as that of the House of Commons in England, elected in the same year, was to destroy the nomination boroughs. So strongly was hatred of the hereditary aristocracy rooted in France, in consequence of the extravagant pretensions it had asserted, and the exclusive privileges it had acquired, that the first Revolution may be said to have been mainly directed to its overthrow. It was this which was meant by its watchword, "*Liberté et Egalité.*" Its abolition, accordingly, was one of the first acts of the Constituent Assembly in 1791. Napoleon, however, who saw clearly that a hereditary monarchy could never exist without a hereditary aristocracy to support it, restored titles of

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honour, and declared them hereditary; and it was one leading object of his policy to effect a "fusion," as he called it, of the ancient and modern nobility. Louis XVIII. on his accession wisely followed the same conciliatory system, and pronounced several sonorous periods on the noblesse on one side of the throne recalling the ancient honours of the monarchy, and on the other the new-born glories of the empire. In secret, however, he was by no means favourably inclined to a hereditary nobility. A House of Peers *named by himself* was much more to his taste, and he was only prevailed on to permit its restoration upon condition that the Crown was to retain the form at least of calling the eldest sons of peers to the Upper House. During the tumult, however, of the Revolution of 1830, the prejudice against the aristocracy greatly increased, and the number of deputies pledged to effect its overthrow was so much increased by the lowering of the suffrage, and the vast increase of republican members whom this introduced into the legislature, that its abolition in the next session became a matter of certainty.[1]

[1] Cap. v. 349, 351; Louis Blanc, iii. 20, 25; Ann. Hist xiv. 297, 300.

91. Argument for the abolition.

The question first came on for consideration on the 27th August, when the Government proposed a simple decree "that the hereditary peerage should be abolished." M. Casimir Périer was known to be a decided supporter of the hereditary peerage, but, aware of the strong feeling which existed on the subject in the country, and the decided majority in the Chamber, he yielded to necessity, and concurred in the measure. Although all knew that the fate of the peerage was sealed, the arguments used on both sides were not the less worthy of attention, and, as not unfrequently happens, the more weighty were adduced on the side which proved unsuccessful. On the part of the abolition it was argued by M. Odillon Barrot, M. Bignon, and General Lafayette, and M. Remusat: "In whatever way you consider the hereditary peerage, it

appears equally useless, dangerous, and fatal. If we regard it as the hereditary branch of the legislature, what security have we that it will not introduce into the possession of power persons without elevation of character, without patriotism, without talent? No function is more important than that of making laws,—none more difficult. What folly, then, can be so great a solecism as to deliver ourselves over to chance for the choice of legislators? Can there be such madness as to cast aside those who might be recommended to such high functions by their probity or their merit, and to select from the first comers the rulers of the State? Yet is not the folly of a hereditary legislature still greater, because a greater number of persons are there admitted entrance to power, and the chances therefore of an overwhelming majority of fools is increased?

92. Continued.

"It is possible to conceive the advantages of a hereditary monarchy, because it is obviously expedient to prevent contests for the crown, and a responsible ministry will always watch over an imbecile king. But who is to watch over an imbecile body of hereditary peers? Where is the cabinet of young aristocratic fools? England was never governed with more energy and wisdom than by Pitt, the minister at one time of an insane king; but what similar remedy could be applied to a numerous assembly? But the peerage, it is said, is a moderating power. If so, can there be so strong an argument for the instant abolition of its hereditary rights? for what can be figured so dangerous as to give to the steadying power a special and separate interest which may awaken the most dangerous passions? The pride of man feels a greater pleasure in exciting a movement than in arresting it: the reason is, that action supposes liberty, that is, force; while resistance implies necessity, that is, weakness. What is true of an individual is much more true of a numerous assembly, for it is the nature of all power to

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emerge from its limits, and to employ, for action and its own purposes, the arms which it has received for resistance and the common good.

93. Continued.

"To what does this restraining power, of which so much is said, in reality amount? Nothing. If an aristocracy is strong, it takes possession of the movement; if weak, it follows it. It is a danger the more in every situation to the perils of the state; not a danger the less. Did the House of Lords oppose any barrier to the encroachments of the Long Parliament? It wished to save Strafford—it condemned him; it wished to preserve the bishops in itself—it voted their exclusion; it desired peace—it voted civil war. It is mere delusion to suppose you can moderate a movement which has got possession of society, by opposing to it a body of hereditary legislators. It is the same thing as to attempt to keep up an aristocracy in the middle of a republic. Reflect on the old contests between the patricians and plebeians, which so long kept on fire the Roman Republic. Do not suppose you lessen the chances of a similar disaster by simply calling the aristocracy a mediating power. At best it will only be a war of two against one; an increase rather than a diminution of difficulties. And if we suppose our peerage hereditary and really independent, how are we to succeed in bending its will when, braving alike the throne and the elective legislature, it sets itself to oppose the reforms which are deemed necessary? Are we to have recourse to a creation of peers? If so, adieu to all consideration or respect for the hereditary body. It has ceased to moderate—it has come only to obey.

94. Continued.

"If we consider the peerage as in reality a representative assembly, what interest does it represent? With what order is it allied in the state to which revolution has now brought the country? Have not the fiefs been abolished? Is not feudality dead and buried? Where shall we find in France the superior class which in England is united with the people against the oppression of

the throne, and has acquired a sort of hereditary title to the respect of generations to come? Where shall we find in France any trace of the relations of patron and client, of proprietor and tenant? In this country, therefore, whatever may be the case elsewhere, a hereditary aristocracy is liable to the objection of being linked to no existing interest in the State, and yet recalling the remembrance of the odious privileges, against which, in 1789, the nation rose *en masse*. At this moment, what is it but the immense middle class which is striking down the aristocracy? What more is needed to prove it is adverse to the intelligence, the spirit, the light of the age? If the hereditary peerage had had its roots in the nation, would it of late years have given proofs only of its impotence? What has it done for Napoleon, vanquished at Waterloo? What has it done for Louis XVIII., when himself exiled by the exile of the island of Elba? What did it do on the 29th of July for Charles X.? What did it then do for liberty? and on the day following, the 9th August 1830, what did it do for its own credit or reputation? Impotent to save, it is powerful only to destroy; bereft of respect, it exists only to degrade.

95. Concluded.

"The supporters of the hereditary peerage are consistent only in error. They say that there are always in the world two opposite principles—movement and rest; that the elective chamber represents the first, the hereditary the second. But if it be really true that the coexistence of the antagonistic principles is not an accidental or transitory circumstance, but an essential and permanent condition of human society, what conclusion are we to draw from it? What but this, that society contains in its bosom the seeds of a permanent and lasting contest; that war without truce is the law of the world; that, condemned to undergo alternately the triumph of one or other of these opposing powers, the people must always be either swept up in the whirl of a devouring flame, or

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struck with stupor in a stagnation fatal to all improvement? Do you really suppose it is possible, by interposing a third party between these mighty antagonists, to prevent them from coming into collision? The Crown, which is supposed to be this intermediate power, must inevitably soon become a mere weapon in the hands of one or other of them. The truth is, the supposed existence of these antagonistic powers is a vain illusion, arising from their having been found, from accidental circumstances, in the states of modern Europe. There is but one lasting and eternal condition of society, and that is *durability in progress*. To doubt this, is to deny progress, to blaspheme God, to deliver the world in advance to the government of chance. The existence of these opposite principles in modern kingdoms is a fact, but it is an evil. It should be the object of the legislator to eradicate, not perpetuate it. *Unity in power* is the great principle of good government. England is no example to the contrary. Its three separate powers are in reality but so many emanations of one supreme authority: *tria juncta in uno* should be its motto. To attempt to frame consistency out of opposition is to organise anarchy, to perpetuate chaos."[1]

[1] Moniteur, Nov. 17-29, 1831; Ann. Hist. xiv. 296, 307; Louis Blanc, iii. 26, 37.

96. Answer of the defenders of the peerage.

To these able arguments, which carried with them four-fifths of the Assembly, it was answered by a small but enlightened minority, headed by M. Guizot, M. Thiers, M. Royer Collard, and M. Berryer. "We are all agreed," said they, "that the great object in framing the constitution of a legislature is to adopt that which is likely to secure the greatest number of able and competent legislators. The only question is, which system is most likely to attain that object? But experience has proved that nothing but a hereditary peerage can effect this. It alone can create, on the side of Government, a number of fixed situations, the holders of which are identified in interest with the Crown, and yet have permanent possessions which may render them independent,

and exempt from the passions or ambition which must animate the Government in its struggle with the democracy. What we have need of is to find in society a class of men who make of politics and the science of government *their fixed and habitual study*, their business, their profession, as others do of law, arms, merchandise, or physic. We need a class of men *essentially and by caste politicians*. By a hereditary peerage you attain that object; by no other means is it possible to do so. You rear up a class of men for whom situations are ready made, and who are in a manner born politicians. Placed at the summit, however, they will never fail to receive, at the proper time, the impulse of that democracy which is always the most extensive and powerful element in society, and from the most eminent members of which it will always draw its recruits. Madame de Stael says, 'A hereditary magistracy, of which the recollections of birth form a part, is an indispensable element in a limited monarchy.' The destruction of the hereditary peerage was an idea of 1789; but how many ideas of that year have now been found by experience to have been erroneous? The charter itself is based upon the rejection of the greater part of them. Shall we then adopt this one erroneous idea from them, and in so doing destroy the constitutional throne which we profess a desire to establish?

97. Continued.

"The peerage is essentially representative, and what it represents in society is superiorities—superiorities of every kind—of birth, of fortune, of services, of genius, of learning. Would you cause the peerage to spring, like the Chamber of Deputies, from popular election? All these classes will remain unrepresented; and elevate the elective franchise as much as you please, it will always represent material interests—it can never become that citadel of superiorities which a hereditary chamber, placed beside the Government, of necessity does. Would you form the Peers out of persons chosen by the sovereign out of a certain number of categories prescribed by law? Then the peerage

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would represent nothing but the will of the monarch, and become an instrument the more for ministerial corruption or tyrannic power. By the first system, you will merely have two chambers elected by the same persons, and devoted to the same interests, and alike hostile to the superiorities, now defenceless, and the Crown. By the second system, the Chamber of Peers is struck at the heart—its respectability, its independence are gone; it can serve only to veil the despotism of the sovereign. Take away its name, you will have a falsehood the less in the structure of society.

98. Continued.

"It is in vain to oppose to these eternal truths the common argument that merit is not hereditary, that the talents of the father do not pass to the son, and that a hereditary chamber may become a mere chamber of fools. Be it so. Talents do not always pass; but traditions pass, feelings are communicated by descent, and that suffices for our argument. But is it true that talents are not hereditary? There are many examples to the contrary, especially in descent by the mother's side. The peerage is composed of two or three hundred families: if talent is awanting in some of them, it will not be awanting in others; and allow me to say, if men of talent sometimes are the fathers of fools, fools are as often the fathers of men of talent.

99. Continued.

"Nothing but hereditary succession can render the peerage independent of the influence of the Crown on the one hand, and the favour of the people on the other. If experience has proved that an upper chamber is indispensable to form a check upon the precipitance of the lower, is it not expedient that it should be respected? But how can it ever be so, if it is either the instrument of a sovereign's pleasure or a people's caprice? As now constituted, the peerage is not a privilege; it is a political right, like royalty or the elective franchise, accorded to particular persons or families, not for their own, but for the general good. Hereditary right, in forming the basis

of a new aristocracy, can never now revive the abuses of the ancient régime; they have for ever been rendered impossible by civil equality, and the eligibility of all to all offices. Aristocracy, as an exclusive caste, has been destroyed, without return; but it is otherwise with a generic assemblage of great families, modern glories, scientific celebrities, senatorial services. *Their* preservation and progressive increase is an essential part of the social system as it exists in our day. By a universal and indelible instinct of our nature, so long as the transmission of fortunes is permitted will mankind look in the son for the illustration of the father.

100. Continued.

"Families already founded exist in society; more are every day added to them. What is to become of their descendants? If you do not identify them with the Government, they will become hostile to it. By making the aristocracy hereditary, you do for it what you have already done for the throne by declaring its descent fixed; you will neutralise all the tyrannies which might aim at elevating themselves to supreme power. In the hereditary peerage they will be blended together, and actuated by an interest conservative of society; standing separate, they might, from individual ambition, tear it in pieces. The most effective way to render an aristocracy harmless is to declare it hereditary; for then its members, for their families' sake, are restrained from doing evil; and every one, seeking to preserve and transmit what he has acquired, becomes a check upon his neighbour. Should the system of an elective aristocracy triumph, it is easy to foresee what will be the consequence. The sons of the great families will no longer submit to be nullified in the elective peerage. They will aspire to seats in the Chamber of Deputies; and what barrier will be adequate to restrain their ambition, if to the lustre of ancient descent and the influence of present fortune, they add the prestige of popular favour, the sway of ready eloquence in a popularly elected assembly? It was thus

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that Cæsar overturned the liberties of ancient Rome. The elective chamber is, and ever will be, in a free country, the chamber of ambition. Thence it was that Chatham said to his son Pitt, "Never enter the House of Peers." If you deprive the peers of their hereditary right, the great families will throw themselves into the elective chamber, as formerly they did into the antechambers of the Emperor.

101. Concluded.

"It is from want of this element that all governments hitherto constructed have been incomplete. Republicanism is but a sketch; it leaves the principal figure unfilled up, which is that of royalty. Democracy is but a sketch; it also leaves a question unresolved, that of an aristocracy. A representative monarchy leaves none; it is complete in all its parts. As a government, it has the unity of monarchy; as a republic, it has the perseverance of aristocracy, the energy of democracy. That is the government which the country requires. The most liberal writers on government—M. Manuel, the President of the Commission on Government during the Hundred Days; M. Benjamin Constant, in his published work on Political Constitutions—admit this. It is now permitted to us, *probably for the last time*, to arrest the course of our innovations, I dare not say of our destruction. We have had enough of ruin, of changes introduced against the lessons of experience. We are now invited to repose. Maintain then, consecrate anew, the hereditary peerage, and you will not only have preserved an institution, the protector alike of liberty and order, but you will have repelled the invasion of anarchy, and restored the social edifice tottering to its fall."[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 299, 311; Cap. v. 356, 361; Louis Blanc, iii. 30, 32; Moniteur, Oct. 20-29, 1831.

102. The Lower House pass the bill by a great majority.

Such is a summary of the arguments on both sides on this great question, the stirring of which was the first lasting result of the Revolution of July. But it was known throughout what the result would be; the Chamber was bound, by imperious mandates from the electors, to destroy the hereditary peerage. Casimir Périer and

the orator of the Commission confessed with a sigh that the hereditary peerage was on principle the most advisable, but that circumstances, which were irresistible, compelled its abandonment. The vote was taken, amidst great anxiety, on the 18th of October, and the result was a majority of 346 against the hereditary Chamber—the numbers being 386 to 40. The nomination of peers, who were to hold their seats for life only, was committed to the Crown; but it was restricted in the choice to certain "categories," as they were called—that is, certain classes of persons eminent in civil or military affairs—from whom alone the selection could be made. These categories, however, were so numerous and capacious as to admit nearly every person who could by possibility be dignified by the peerage, and thus gave the sovereign, practically speaking, the choice of the whole nation to form a senate for the purpose of putting the last seal upon the laws.[1]

Oct. 18.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 319, 320.

103. Creation of peers to force it through the Upper House, where it passes. Nov. 20.

There remained, however, the existing Chamber of Peers for the bill to pass before it could become law; and servile as the Senate on many occasions had shown itself to be, it was doubtful whether it would put the final seal to its degradation by voting its own abolition. A month elapsed before the question was brought before the Upper House, during which the point was anxiously deliberated in the Cabinet what means should be adopted to overcome the opposition of the peers. During this period of anxious suspense, it was ascertained that the majority against the proposed measure would be at least thirty. In these circumstances, the Cabinet, deeming a crisis as having arrived, which must terminate either in a creation of peers, a popular insurrection, or a *coup d'etat*, preferred the former alternative. On the 20th November there appeared in the *Moniteur* a royal ordinance creating thirty-six persons—all, of course, of the liberal party—peers for life. This step was decisive of the fate of the measure. Towards the end of the next month it was introduced into the now swamped and degraded

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Chamber of Peers; but so strongly rooted was the opposition to the measure, that, even after the creation of 36 peers to carry it through, the majority was only 33, the numbers being 103 to 70. But for the creation, the measure would have been lost by a majority of 3. Next day thirteen of the peers, embracing the representatives of some of the oldest families in France, resigned their seats in the Upper Chamber.[1]

[1] Moniteur, Nov. 20, and Dec. 28, 1831; Ann. Hist. xiv. 319, 333.

104. Reflections on this event.

Thus was finally effected, after its restoration by Napoleon and Louis XVIII., the destruction of the hereditary peerage in France. The unanimous concentration of the efforts of the liberal party in France upon this object, to the entire neglect of others of far greater moment in the interest of freedom, is one of the most curious circumstances in the history of the Revolution, and most characteristic of the disposition of men, even the most enlightened, to look all day to the east, expecting still to see the sun rise there. In 1789, when the first Revolution broke out, the aristocracy was with reason the object of dread, because it was more powerful than either the king or the people; and it was against it, accordingly, that the fervour of popular indignation was in the first instance chiefly directed. But in 1831, circumstances were entirely changed: the aristocracy had been, by the effects of the first convulsion, as much weakened as the executive had been strengthened, and the danger to the cause of freedom was no longer from the privileges of the nobility, but from the power of the sovereign. The confiscations of the Convention had deprived most of them of their estates; the revolutionary law of succession had parcelled out their fortunes; and the pitiable state of dependence of the majority of their number was revealed by the fact that they each received a pension of £300 a-year from the Crown. On the other hand, the centralising system, and the immense increase of government patronage, had augmented the power of the chief magistrate, whether emperor or king, as much as it had thrown

into the shade the influence of the nobles; and the dispenser of £50,000,000 annual revenue might soon be able to despise the impotent resistance of the legislature which was to record his decrees. Yet, while the Liberals destroyed the hereditary aristocracy, the last barrier against despotism, they concurred in all measures likely to increase the power of the executive. "The triumph of the *bourgeoisie*," says the republican historian, "was complete, *but its ruin was hidden in its victory*."[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, iii. 333.

105. Previous degradation of the hereditary peerage.

Not less remarkable was the *mode* by which this great democratic triumph was effected, or the lesson which it taught to the friends of freedom in future times less important. From the first breaking out of the Revolution in 1789, every era had been marked by successive blows to the power of the aristocracy, and every one had been followed by a vast increase of the power of the executive, but no addition to the liberties of the people. By the union of the Chambers, and the abolition of nobility, its power had been totally destroyed in the commencement of the struggle, and then ensued the tyranny of the Convention, the despotism of Napoleon. With the restoration of the Upper House, and the rights of hereditary succession by the charter of Louis XVIII., a mixed constitution was given to the country during fifteen years—the only period, according to the confession of all the liberal historians, when real liberty was enjoyed in France. But during this period successive *coups d'etat* weakened the power of the Upper House, and numerous *creations of peers* at once destroyed its independence and lessened its respectability. The placing of Louis XVIII. on the throne was immediately followed by the creation of eighty-two peers, required to neutralise the influence of the Napoleonists in the Senate.[2] The famous *coup d'etat* of 5th September 1816, which changed the constitution of the Lower House, was carried through the Upper Chamber by a creation of sixty-three peers.[3] Charles X. signalised his accession by a creation of seventy-six peers;[4] and then followed,

[2] Ante, c. iii. § 20.
[3] Ante, c. vi. § 96.
[4] Ante, c. xvi. § 69.

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within a few years afterwards, the Polignac ministry, and Ordonnances of July. The seizure of the throne by Louis Philippe was immediately succeeded by the expulsion of all these new members from the House of Peers; and within eighteen months after, the popular voice had become so strong that thirty-six were created to destroy their own hereditary rights! It will appear in the sequel whether the cause of balanced freedom gained anything by this step, and whether the remainder of the reign of Louis Philippe was anything more than a continued struggle of the people against the executive, now rendered well-nigh irresistible by the destruction of the last barrier against its influence. It is a singular circumstance, indicative of the inability of the lessons of experience to teach wisdom to a heated generation, that, at the very moment that the creation of peers was the engine employed to destroy the last barrier of constitutional freedom in France, the same step was vehemently pressed upon the King of England to lay the foundation, as it was thought, of general liberty in this country.

106. Experience of Great Britain in regard to a hereditary peerage.

Probably the wit of man, to the end of the world, will add little to the arguments, of which an abstract has now been given, drawn from general considerations, for and against the abolition of a hereditary peerage. But, without being so presumptuous as to attempt what is obviously hopeless, the English historian may be permitted to observe, that *experience* in his own country has added much to the strength of the arguments advanced against the abolition. What is very remarkable, it has done so, chiefly by adopting, and reducing to practice, the strongest reasons adduced for that measure. No one can doubt that the interest of society requires that as able a body of legislators as possible should be secured for an independent branch of the legislature; but experience has now proved, contrary to what was generally supposed, that this is not to be done by vesting its nomination for life either in the sovereign or the people. The House of

Peers of England has not only exhibited for a century past, but *exhibits now*, an amount of statesmanlike talent and capacity which we will look for in vain either in the nominees of the French Emperor, or in the popularly elected Senate of America. If any one doubts this, let him read the debates on any of the great questions which have been agitated in the country, during the last half-century, in the Peers and the Commons: the superiority of the former is self-evident. The proof of the reality of this superiority is decisive. By the Reform Bill, the middle class in the towns have gained the entire command of the country; they have enjoyed for twenty-five years the appointment of the Cabinet, and by successive small creations of peers they have obtained the majority in the Upper, as, by the influence of the borough members, they have of the Lower House. The prerogative of the Crown, the votes of both branches of the legislature, have been at their disposal; but they have never yet been able to form a government of their own. The more liberal the party has been which was called to the helm, the greater has always been the number of the noblemen in its Cabinet. The abolition of the corn laws, and the imposition of the tax on landed succession, and many other measures, prove that this has not been owing to the want of power in the popular party, so far as votes are concerned. It has been entirely owing to the want of power in debate and statesmanlike wisdom in its leaders in Parliament.

107. Reason of the superiority in general of the aristocracy as statesmen.

The reason of this is apparent to any one who considers the structure of English society, and the mental training requisite for success in representative assemblies. The sons of the hereditary aristocracy have proved themselves superior to those of the middle or working class in the arena of Parliament, for the same reason that their ancestors were superior in the tournament. It is their *business to joust*, and practice improves the natural powers not less in the tilts of the mind than in those of the body. No amount of natural talent or of practice, or success in

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other professions, can supply the want of this essential requisite. The common observation, that even the most eminent lawyers seldom attain any great success in Parliament, is a proof that even the profession, the habits of which are most akin to those required in representative assemblies, does not afford the requisite training for their direction. No one supposes that a Cabinet could be formed out of the Manchester school, or the mercantile representatives of great towns; they are valuable, from their local or peculiar information, in Parliament, but they are incapable of taking a lead in it. The reason is, they have not been trained to its contests in their early years. Success in the other walks of life is not an earnest of eminence in Parliament, but a bar to it, because it has arisen from a long-continued bent of the mind in another direction. It is as impossible for great success at the bar, in the army, or in commerce, to qualify a person, even of the greatest talents, to obtain the lead in Parliament, as it is for the lead in Parliament to qualify for a surgical operation, or the command of the Channel fleet, or the direction of the siege of Sebastopol.

108. Increased vigour and capacity this gives to the higher branches of the aristocracy.

While this cause of lasting influence renders the existence of a hereditary class of legislators the best security for capacity in the direction of affairs, by training a body of men to that direction as their end and aim in life, it operates not less powerfully in elevating the character and improving the talents of that class, and qualifying them for the direction of affairs. Foreigners often express surprise at the long-continued ascendancy of the English aristocracy in the affairs of their country, so different from the fate which has overtaken that order in so many Continental states; but whoever is acquainted with the different *strata of society* in the British empire will have no difficulty in discerning the reason. They have kept the lead so long, because the constitution had made them legislators, and thus trained them to its duties. Had they been as politically nullified as the nobles of France

and Spain were under the old régime, they would have been equally inefficient. If any one will compare the capacity and conversation of the landed proprietors, and still more of their wives and daughters, *below the line of Parliament and above it*, the difference will appear extreme. The moment we emerge from the class in which hunting, shooting, and fishing form the great objects of life, and rise into that in which political questions are the subject of thought and conversation, we feel as if in another world.

109. Importance of the interests of the hereditary peers being identified with those of production.

Add to this, that it is of the last importance that one branch at least of the legislature should be for the most part composed of those whose position is fixed—*who have not their fortune to make*, whose interests are identified with those of production, and who have an inheritance to leave to their descendants which might be endangered by precipitate innovation. A fly-wheel is required in the political not less than the mechanical machine. Without it the very force of the generated power may in critical periods tear it in pieces. The great danger in an old, wealthy, and mixed community is, that the inhabitants of towns will, from their superior wealth, concentration, and intelligence, get the command of those of the country, and in consequence pursue a series of measures, for their own immediate advantage, fatal in the end to the best interests of society, and ruinous to the national independence. Without asserting that the existence of a separate legislature, composed of a hereditary legislature, is able entirely to obviate this danger, which seems inherent in the very structure of society, it may at least safely be affirmed, that it tends greatly to lessen it, and that if perpetually recruited, as the English aristocracy is, by accessions of talent and energy from the middle classes of society, it may long serve as a barrier alike against the despotism of the executive and the madness of the people.

# CHAPTER XXVI.

POLISH REVOLUTION AND WAR, FROM ITS COMMENCEMENT IN NOVEMBER 1830, TO ITS TERMINATION IN SEPTEMBER 1831.

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1. Terrible wars which have ever prevailed between Europe and Asia.

SURVIVING all the changes of time, of religion, of empire, and of dynasty, one great contest has in every age of the world divided mankind. It is the war of Asia and Europe—the strife of the descendants of Shem with the sons of Japhet. All other contests sink into insignificance in comparison. The nations of Europe and Asia have had many and bloody wars among each other, but they have been as nothing compared to those terrible strifes which in different ages have in a manner precipitated one hemisphere upon the other. This enduring warfare has alternately pierced each hemisphere to the heart: it brought the arms of Alexander to Babylon, and those of England to Cabool; it conducted the Saracens to Tours, and Attila to Chalons. In one age it induced the disasters of Julian, in another the Moscow retreat; it led to the fall of Rome and Constantinople; it precipitated Europe upon Asia during the Crusades, and Asia upon Europe during the fervour of Mahommedan conquest. Cæsar was preparing an expedition against the Parthians when he was assassinated; Napoleon perished from attempting one against Russia. The Goths, who overturned the Roman empire, appeared first as suppliants on the Lower Danube, and they were them-

selves impelled by a human wave which rose on the frontiers of China. It is the East, not the North, which in every age has threatened Europe; it is in the table-land of Tartary that the greatest conquerors of mankind have been bred. The chief heroes whose exploits form the theme of history or song, have in different ages signalised themselves in the immortal contest against these ruthless barbarians. Achilles, Themistocles, Leonidas, Alexander, Pompey, Marius, Belisarius, Constantine Paleologus, Charles Martel, Godfrey of Bouillon, Richard Cœur-de-Lion, John Hunniades, Scanderbeg, John Sobieski, Don John of Austria, Prince Eugene, Charles XII., Lord Clive, Lord Lake, Napoleon, have in successive ages carried it on. It has been sung in one age by Homer, in another by Tasso; it has awakened at one period the powers of Herodotus, in another those of Gibbon. It began with the siege of Troy, but it will not end with that of Sebastopol.

2. Causes of this perpetual strife.

It is owing to the different characters of the races of men who have peopled the two continents that this strife has been so long continued and terrible. Though all profane history, not less than Holy Writ, teaches us that the human race originally sprung from one family in the centre of the eastern continent, yet the descendants of Adam who sojourned in Asia were essentially different from those who wandered to Europe. Nor was this surprising: we see differences as great in the same household every day around us. It was the difference of character which rendered their seats different: the Asiatics remained at home, because they were submissive; the Europeans wandered abroad, because they were turbulent. Authority was as necessary to the one as it was distasteful to the other. So essentially was this the distinctive character of the two races, and the original cause of their separation, that it characterised the opposite sides in the very first ages of their existence. Priam governed the tributary states of Troy with the authority

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of a sultan; but the Grecian host *elected* the King of men to rule them. It was composed of many different independent bodies; and the first epic in the world narrates the wrath of one of its chieftains, and the woes his insubordination brought upon the children of Hellas.* The first great strife recorded in authentic history was between the forces of the great king and the coalesced troops of the European *republics;* and the same character has distinguished the opposite sides to this day. Athens and Lacedemon were the prototypes of France and England; Thermopylæ of Inkermann, Cyrus of Nicholas. So early did Nature affix one character upon the different races of men, and so indelible is the impress of her hand.

3. Opposite sources of their strength and weakness.

From this original diversity in the character of the two great dominant races of men has arisen a difference not less remarkable in the sources of their strength and the means of their resistance. Unity renders Asia formidable; diversity has constituted the strength of Europe. Multitudes of slaves, impelled by one impulse, obeying one direction, follow the standards of the Eastern sultan; crowds of freemen, actuated by opposite passions, often torn by discordant interests, form the phalanxes of Western liberty. The strength of Asia consists mainly in the unity of power and administration which, in the hands of an able and energetic monarch, can be perseveringly directed to one object; that of Europe is found in the resources which the energy of freemen furnishes to the state, and the courage with which, when danger arrives, it is repelled. The weakness of the despotic dynasties of Asia is to be found in their entire dependence on the vigour and capacity of the ruling

* " Μηνιν ἄειδε, θεὰ, Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος
Οὐλομένην, ἣ μυρί' Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε' ἔθηκε·
Πολλὰς δ' ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν
Ἡρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἑλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν
Οἰωνοῖσί τε πᾶσι—Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή—,
Ἐξ οὗ δὴ τὰ πρῶτα διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε
Ἀτρεΐδης τε, ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν, καὶ δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς."
*Iliad*, i. 1–7.

sovereign, and the destruction of the national resources by the oppression or venality of subordinate governors. The weakness of the free states of Europe arises mainly from the impossibility of giving habits of foresight to the ruling multitudes, and their invincible repugnance to present burdens in order to avert future disaster. If it were possible to give to the energy of Europe the foresight of Asia, or develop, under the despotism of the East, the energy of the West, the state enjoying even for a brief period the effects of such a combination would obtain the empire of the world. This accordingly is what happened to Rome in ancient and British India in modern times. But universal dominion, except under peculiar circumstances, and for a very brief period, is not part of the system of Nature; and to eschew it, the gifts of power are variously distributed to its various offspring.

4. Disastrous effects of the conquest of the Byzantine Empire by the Turks, and of the partition of Poland.

Two great sins—one of omission, and one of commission—have been committed by the states of Europe in modern times, and it is from their combined effect that the extreme difficulty of the Eastern Question, and the perils with which it is now environed, have arisen. The sin of omission was allowing the Byzantine Empire to be overrun by the Turks in the fifteenth century—the sin of commission, the partition of Poland in the nineteenth. It is under the effects of both that we are now labouring; for they broke down the barrier of Europe against Asia, and converted the outworks of freedom against despotism into the outworks of despotism against freedom. It is historically certain, but not generally known, that the balance between the Christians and Turks hung even a few years before the taking of Constantinople in 1454, and that a very slight support from the Western powers would have enabled the former to drive the latter back into Asia. In 1446, when John Hunniades, with his noble Hungarians on the Danube, and Scanderbeg in Epirus, with heroic constancy made head

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against the Osmanlis, Constantinople was still in the hands of the Greek emperors; all the fortresses on the Danube had been wrested from the Turks; Macedonia and the western provinces were in arms for the Cross; and twenty thousand auxiliary troops from France or England would have enabled Hunniades, in the decisive battle of Varna, to have for ever expelled the ruthless invaders from the soil of Europe. But the Western powers, divided by separate interests, or incapable of just foresight, did nothing: the Pope in vain endeavoured to form an efficient league of Christendom against the Mahommedans; the strength of Europe held back, that of Asia was brought to the very front by the genius of Mahomet II.; Constantinople was taken, the Greek empire overthrown, and a chasm made in the defences of Europe against Asia, which all the efforts of later times have been scarcely able to repair.[1]

[1] Lamartine, Hist. de la Turquie, iii. 90, 120; Von Hammer, Hist. de Turcs, v. 124, 145.

5. Sin of Europe in the partition of Poland.

The sin of commission has been still greater, for it was done from baser and more guilty motives, and it was obviously attended by a more formidable and lasting danger. The partition of Poland was not the work merely of Muscovite strength or ambition, great as they were—the frontier powers of Europe concurred in it; and Austria, in particular, which had been indebted to Polish valour for deliverance from the sabres of the Osmanlis, requited her gallant deliverers by joining in their destruction, and receiving a share of their possessions as a reward of her ingratitude. To say that this partition was a flagrant violation of the law of nations, a shameless instance of national ingratitude, and unparalleled even in the annals of Christian atrocity, is to express only what has since been the unanimous opinion of mankind. It is of more importance to observe what lasting political effects this great measure of spoliation has had on the subsequent balance of power in Europe, and how completely the justice of the Divine administration has been vindicated by the results, espe-

cially to the partitioning powers, with which it has been attended. CHAP. XXVI.

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The partition of Poland first broke down the northern barrier of Europe against Asia, and brought the might of the Orientals to the very heart of European civilisation. What the conquest of the Byzantine Empire had done in the south, that fatal spoliation effected in the north of Europe. Being the most powerful of the partitioning powers, the Semiramis of the north obtained the lion's share to herself. By the successive partitions of 1772 and 1794 the whole of Poland was divided between Russia, Prussia, and Austria; and Lithuania, Volhynia, and Podolia, which fell to Russia, contained no less than nine millions of inhabitants. By the treaty of 1815, Russia obtained in addition the grand-duchy of Warsaw, containing four millions, which had been raised up by the Treaty of Tilsit, and her frontiers were brought to within one hundred and eighty miles of both Berlin and Vienna. It may safely be asserted that by these acquisitions the strength of Russia as against the states of continental Europe was more than doubled; for not only was the barrier which had hitherto restrained her advances swept away, but the strength, great in a military point of view, of the Sarmatian nation, was added to her arms. Thenceforward she became irresistible in eastern Europe; nothing but a coalition of the Western powers, the last hope of freedom, could arrest her advance. The great war of 1854 was the legacy bequeathed to Europe by the partition of 1794.

6. Vast increase of the power of Russia from the partition of Poland.

Yet, because the guilt of the partitioning powers was great, it is not to be supposed that the fault of the Poles themselves had been small, or that they are justified in raising the cry of injured innocence among the other nations of Europe. On the contrary, they fell mainly in consequence of their own misconduct; and every other nation which imitates them will, to the end of the world, undergo the same punishment. The Sar-

7. Faults of the Poles which led to their subjugation.

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matia of the ancients, Poland, on the first settlement of the northern nations after the fall of the Roman empire, was the most extensive kingdom in Europe. Extending from the Baltic to the Black Sea, from Smolensko to Prague, it was the most powerful state on the Continent, so far as material resources went. Prussia, Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, the Ukraine, Podolia, Volhynia, as well as Poland Proper and Lithuania, were comprised in its mighty domains. Its forests, abounding with fir and oak, formed inexhaustible supplies for the construction of houses and ship-building; its soil, everywhere perfectly flat, and enriched in most places, like the American, by the perennial vegetable decay of the forests, was admirably adapted for grain crops, and has ever rendered its harbours the granary of Europe for wheat; its great rivers supplied, ready-made by the hand of Nature, as in the valley of the Mississippi, the immense advantages of a network of water communications penetrating every part of the country; its inhabitants, intrepid and brave almost beyond any other in Europe, had always been distinguished by a passionate love of freedom and attachment to their country; and they have been characterised, with truth, by Napoleon, as the men in Europe who most readily and quickly form soldiers. There must, therefore, have been some great national fault, some overpowering defects in constitution or character, which neutralised all these advantages, and rendered the nation to which Nature had given the greatest means of power, and placed on the frontier of civilisation to shield it from the barbarians, the weakest and most unfortunate.

8. It was the impatience of taxation which ruined Poland.

It is not difficult to see what it was which brought this about. The "ignorant impatience of taxation" did the whole. Poland being a country in which, probably from homogeneity of original race, and the absence of any of the distinctions of rank consequent on foreign conquest, equality was really and practically, not nominally, established, the preservation of their equal rights became the ruling passion of the people, to which every other

consideration, how pressing soever, was sacrificed. Among these rights the most important and the most valued was that of being free from taxation. In all countries where the people have really got the power of government into their own hands, and where they are not ruled, as in ancient Rome, by a hereditary senate, or in modern France, by a despotic Committee of Public Safety, this is a favourite object; and accordingly, in America, no statesman has ever ventured to hint even at any direct taxes. So strong was this feeling in Poland that it amounted to a perfect passion. No danger, however great—no calamities, however threatening—no perils, however overwhelming, could induce them to submit to the smallest present burden to ward off future disaster. In Sidney Smith's words, "they preferred any load of infamy, however great, to any burden of taxation, however light." They constantly trusted to their own valour and warlike spirit to avert any dangers with which their country might be threatened; but although their heroic qualities often extricated the republic from perils which seemed insurmountable, it could not supply the want of a regular army, or the preparation in peace of the means of effective defence in war. When all the adjoining states were putting on foot powerful standing armies and constructing strong fortresses, they had only a few regiments of mercenaries as a durable force, no fortified towns or arsenals, and they trusted the national defence entirely to the *pospolite*, or armed convocation of the nobles. The consequence was, that, in the last struggle under Kosciusko, they could not oppose 25,000 men to the united armies of Russia, Austria, and Prussia. In a word, the Poles did, during three hundred years, what Mr Cobden and the Peace Conference so strenuously urged the English government to do; and had their advice been equally implicitly followed, England, like Poland, would beyond all question, in the course of time, have been swept from among nations.

A strange and mysterious connection has existed for a long period between the cause of Poland and that of

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9. Mysterious connection between Poland and the cause of democracy.

European democracy. It is more than a mere ardent sympathy of the one for the other; it is a linking together of fate, apparently by the decree of Supreme Power. As Poland was the frontier state of European civilisation, so it seems to have been destined to stand as the advanced guard to warn the other nations by its fate of the danger which awaited them if they listened to the voice of the tempter within their own bosoms. Its long-continued misfortunes, despite the valour of its sons, and ultimate subjugation, was beyond all doubt owing to the violence of the passion of equality in its inhabitants, which led them to retain an elective government when they should have exchanged it for a hereditary, and neglect all provision for defence when their neighbours were daily augmenting their means of attack. When the volcano broke out in France, and Polish nationality was extinguished, the same connection continued. It was the anxiety of the partitioning powers to provide for the division of Poland in 1792, 1793, and 1794, which led them to starve the war with France, and permit its insane demagogues to precipitate the French nation into the frightful career of the Revolution, when they might, by uniting their forces, with ease have captured Paris, and restored a constitutional monarchy in a single campaign. With the crushing of the revolutionary spirit in France in 1814, and the capture of Paris, Poland again emerged from its ashes; it obtained from the efforts of Lord Castlereagh at the Congress of Vienna the shadow at least of nationality, and the progress it made during the next fifteen years, and the strength it displayed during the contest with Russia in 1831, proved that the division and weakness of democracy had hitherto been the cause of its ruin. With the triumph of the barricades, the dark cloud again came over the fortunes of Poland; her nationality was destroyed, and a long period of humiliation, of suffering, again presented the lesson to Europe of the national punishment of democratic institutions.

1830. 10. Prosperity of Poland under the Russian rule from 1815 to 1830.

Though far from enjoying the blessings of real freedom, the small portion of Poland which was erected in 1815 into a separate state, with the Emperor of Russia on its throne, enjoyed a degree of prosperity, and made an amount of progress, far beyond any that it had ever experienced under the weak government of its elected kings, or the blind rule of its stormy Diets. The statistical facts already given place this beyond a doubt.[1] The army was thirty thousand strong, and in the very highest state of discipline and equipment; while the growing information and intelligence of the people, owing to the great extension of the means of education among them, and the vast increase of their material comforts, had augmented in a surprising degree the resources of the country. Many grievances, indeed, were still complained of, and some existed. It is scarcely to be expected they should at once disappear under the sceptre of the Czar. Though fond of Poland, to a native of whom he was married, and proud beyond measure of its troops, Constantine, its viceroy, was by nature capricious and passionate. Several acts of tyranny occurred during his government, and it was too evident that the attempt to ingraft the constitutional freedom of Europe upon the traditional despotism of Asia was of all human undertakings the most difficult. The sittings of the Chambers, which never lasted more than a few weeks, had been discontinued for five years before 1830, when June 1830. they were held for a month by the Emperor Nicholas. The debates were not made public, and the most rigorous censorship of the press shut out the communication of independent thought throughout the community. But with all these restraints and evils, which were far from imaginary, the condition of Poland had marvellously improved, from the mere effect of a steady rule, since it fell under the government of Russia. The proof of this is decisive. Strong as Russia was, and immensely as her resources had augmented since the last partition in 1794,[2] the strength of Poland had grown in a still greater pro-

[1] Ante, c. viii. §§ 9, 10.

[2] Cap. iv. 40, 46.

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portion. Skrzynecki made a very different stand from Kosciusko, and a quarter of its old territory and population maintained, for the first time, in 1831, an equal contest with the forces of the Czar.

11. This prosperity increased the passion for independence.

But this very circumstance of the increased strength and improved condition of the people only rendered more intense the desire for independence, and more galling the sense of subjugation. The sight of the Polish arms over the public edifices, of the Polish uniform on the soldiers, of the Polish standards over their ranks, perpetually recalled the days of their independence; while the sense of the growing prosperity and resources of the country inspired the hope of at length succeeding in re-establishing it. The reviews of Constantine's guards and the garrison of Warsaw, often twenty thousand strong; the magnificent squadrons of the cavalry, the steady ranks of the infantry, the splendid trains of the artillery, all in the Polish uniform, composed of national troops, and in the finest possible state of discipline and equipment, inspired them with an overweening idea of their own strength. No force on earth seemed capable, to their fond and ardent imaginations, of resisting the gallant arrays of armed men, equal to the élite of the French or Russian Guards, which were constantly passing before their eyes. The military spirit became universal, from the frequent exhibitions of its most attractive spectacles; patriotic ardour widespread, from the progressive revival of its hopes. The officers of the Polish regiments, composed entirely of the nobles, in whom the passion for independence burned most strongly, mutually encouraged each other in these sentiments; the young men at the military schools and the university of Warsaw, all drawn from the same class, embraced them with still more inconsiderate and generous ardour. Out of the rising prosperity of Poland, and the gradual removal of its grievances, sprung very naturally a consciousness of national strength, and a desire for the restoration of national independence. It

is a mistake to suppose that the most serious insurrections arise from the extremity of suffering; it breaks rather than excites the spirit. It is true, as Lord Bacon says, that the worst rebellions come from the stomach; but it is not when it is most sorely pinched that they arise. It is when the pinching is coming on, or going off, that they are most to be dreaded.

12. Secret societies in Poland.

Ever since the year 1825, when the great rebellion broke out in the Russian army, which was repressed, as already recounted, by the vigour and intrepidity of Nicholas,[1] and even before that time, an immense secret society had existed in Poland, having for its principal object to restore the national independence. It was not so much directed, like the Carbonari of Italy, the Red Republicans of France, or the Ribbonmen of Ireland, to objects of social change or disorder, as to the grand object of replacing Poland in its ancient place in the European family. Accordingly, it embraced a greater number of classes, was actuated by more generous sentiments, and was less likely to be stained by crime. It was a fixed principle in these societies, that nothing should ever be committed to writing, but everything trusted to the fidelity and honour of the affiliated. And so worthy did they prove of the trust, that the existence of the gigantic organisation, which had its ramifications not only in the kingdom of Poland, but in Gallicia and the grand-duchy of Posen, the portions which had fallen to Austria and Prussia on the final partition, was not even suspected when its designs were approaching maturity. There is no example recorded in history of so great a conspiracy, embracing so many thousand individuals, having been so long and faithfully kept secret,—a decisive proof of the ardent spirit and sentiments of honour by which its members were actuated.[2]

[1] Ante, chap. viii. § 129.

[2] Roman Soltyk, Pologne et la Révolution en 1830, i. 24, 27.

The French Revolution of 1830, as might naturally be supposed, excited the warmest sympathy, and produced the most unbounded enthusiasm in Poland; and the sub-

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13. Different plans of the conspirators.

Sept. 29.

sequent democratic movements in Switzerland, Italy, and Germany, still farther fanned the flame. The effervescence soon became such that it was obvious it could not be restrained; and the chiefs of the conspiracy, accordingly, held several meetings at Warsaw, in the end of September, at which the plan of operations was discussed and agreed on. Two different projects were laid before the meeting, and their respective chances of success fully discussed. The first was, to embrace not merely the kingdom of Poland, now under the domination of Russia, which was comparatively of very small extent, but the whole ancient provinces of the empire, in the insurrection. According to this plan, not only Poland Proper, but Lithuania, Podolia, Volhynia, the Ukraine, Gallicia, and the grand-duchy of Posen, in all of which the conspiracy had ramifications, would have been embraced in its flame. The conspirators calculated that, taking into view the regular troops in these provinces, all of whom, it was expected, would join them, and the landwehr, which might immediately be rendered available, they might reckon within a few weeks on bringing a hundred and eighty thousand men into the field, with two hundred and seventy-six guns; and in six months this force might be doubled. On the other hand, the objection to this plan obviously was, that it would induce the certain hostility of Austria and Prussia, as well as Russia, upon them, and these united powers might, within a few months, bring three hundred thousand men against them. The second project was, to confine the insurrection to Poland Proper, make Warsaw its headquarters, and provoke an insurrection only in Lithuania, Volhynia, and Podolia, with which Russia only was concerned. After mature deliberation, it was determined to adopt the latter project, as likely to embroil them, in the first instance at least, with a lesser number of enemies, and as withdrawing more from the ranks of their enemies than it added to those of their friends.[1]

[1] Roman Soltyk, i. 25, 33; Ann. Hist. xiii. 654, 655.

The insurrection was originally fixed for the 20th October, on which day the Polish regiment of the Guard would be on service, and occupy all the posts which were held two days alternately by the Poles and Russians. Thirty determined young men, armed with pistols, and wrapped in cloaks, were, at the inspection of the troops, to mingle with the crowd which always surrounded the Viceroy on such occasions, and despatch him; while fifty more, with drawn sabres, were to destroy the Russian generals who surrounded him. The immediate and unanimous support of the Polish Guard, and the whole Polish troops, 10,000 strong, in Warsaw, was confidently relied on; and, with their aid, it was hoped they would, without difficulty, succeed in surrounding and disarming the Russian troops, only seven thousand in number, most of whom were of Polish origin, in the capital. A provisional government was to have been immediately proclaimed by acclamation, the members of which were all fixed on, leaving its formal appointment to flow from the Diet, which was to be immediately convoked. The whole details of this plan were arranged, and it had every prospect of success; but it was prevented by the police having obtained some dark hints of what was in agitation, and arresting some of the leaders. It was fortunate for Poland that it was so; for little could have been expected from an insurrection, even in the most justifiable of all circumstances, which was to have commenced with the murder of the Viceroy and the principal persons in the state.[1]

14. Original plan, which proved abortive.

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 43, 44.

Meanwhile Constantine, with that mixture of ferocity and *insouciance* which formed the leading feature of his character, and is the distinctive mark of savage descent, did nothing. Though he had taken an active part in several general battles, especially Austerlitz, his personal courage was seriously doubted; of moral courage he was entirely destitute.[2] Like most other men who are not gifted with that commanding quality, he persisted in declaring there was no danger, because he could not bear to look it in the

15. Supineness of Constantine, and progress of the conspiracy.

[2] Hist. of Europe, c. xl. § 131.

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face; he made no preparations against it, because he shrunk from its contemplation. Though the police were very imperfectly informed as to the details of the conspiracy, and entirely ignorant of its extent and formidable character, they knew enough to be aware that serious danger threatened; and they repeatedly warned the Viceroy to be on his guard, and be prepared for an outbreak. But he uniformly declared that there was no danger, and that he was too popular with the troops to render any insurrection possible. Encouraged by this supineness, the conspirators proceeded rapidly with their preparations, and several new clubs were formed, which came to embrace nearly the whole officers in the army, and the whole youth at the university and public schools. In this conduct of Constantine there is nothing extraordinary, considering his character. To look danger calmly in the face, and make preparations to meet it when still afar off, is the mark, not of a timid, but of a resolute mind. The greater part of the want of previous arrangements, which so often doubles the weight of misfortune to nations as to individuals, is the result of cowardice. Men are *afraid of being afraid*, and therefore they do nothing till the evil day has arrived, just as they delay making their wills till it is too late.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 44, 50, 52; Ann. Hist. xiii. 655.

16. Insurrection of 29th November at Warsaw.

After having been several times adjourned, the insurrection was finally fixed for the 10th of December, when several events, without and within, made its leaders sensible that it had become necessary to strike sooner. Numerous arrests were made by the police, which led the conspirators to apprehend they were discovered, or on the point of being so. The national troops in Gallicia were all withdrawn into Hungary, and replaced by Austrian or Hungarian regiments; while, in the grand-duchy of Posen, the whole landwehr, thirty thousand strong, was either disarmed or removed into the fortresses of Silesia, and their place was supplied by battalions of German troops. These steps at once showed that the objects of the conspiracy were known, and that the powers interested in

the partition were taking precautions against it. It was resolved, accordingly, to delay no longer, and the insurrection was fixed for the 29th November, when the Polish Guards were to be on service at the palace and in the city. On that day, at seven o'clock in the evening, a messenger from the conspirators came to the gate of the barrack military school, where he was anxiously expected, and announced that the "hour of liberty had struck." Instantly the guard turned out, and were joined by the whole scholars, armed to the teeth, who proceeded at a rapid pace, without saying a word, by the bridge Sobieski, from whence they came to the Belvidère Palace, inhabited by the Grand-duke, without experiencing any resistance. The guards at the palace, in part in the secret of the conspiracy, in part intimidated by the sight of so many young men whom they knew to be of the first families in Warsaw, made scarcely any resistance; those who attempted it were instantly cut down. The victorious conspirators in a few minutes inundated every part of the palace; and while part of them despatched Ludowicski, the chief of the police, and General Legendre, the first aide-de-camp on service, the main body, containing the most determined, made straight for the private apartments of the Grand-duke. So rapid was their approach that Constantine had the utmost difficulty in making his escape by a back way; and the Princess Lowicz, his wife, for whom he had renounced the throne of Russia, had only time to carry with her a casket of diamonds and three shifts.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 56, 59; Ann. Hist. xiii. 655, 656; Cap. iv. 50, 51.

17. Rapid progress of the insurrection, and retreat of Constantine from Warsaw. Nov. 30.

Masters of the palace, the insurgents, whose numbers rapidly increased, spread themselves over the streets, calling out, "To arms! to arms!" The agitation in the barracks was soon extreme. The officers did not venture to lead out the men for fear of their joining the insurgents, and in many cases they were in the secret, and favoured their cause. Soon the 4th regiment of the line, an especial favourite of the Grand-duke's, and one of the finest in the service, issued from its barracks, and joined

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the insurrection. The greater part of the regiment of grenadiers, the horse artillery, and the sappers of the Guard, followed their example. Such was the enthusiasm which prevailed, that the inmates of the hospitals, who were able to walk, left their beds, and joined their comrades. Meanwhile a body of the students made themselves masters of the arsenal, where there were forty thousand muskets, which were immediately distributed among the people. A part of the Polish troops, especially the chasseurs of the Polish Guard, and all the Russians, remained faithful to Constantine, and several combats took place in the dark between them and the insurgents, in which General Potocki, commander of the Polish infantry, Generals Sernontkowski and Blume, and several other officers of distinction, both in the Polish and Russian armies, were slain. But when morning dawned, it was evident that they were overmatched. The whole city was in a state of insurrection, and more than half the troops in it had joined the insurgents. In these circumstances, Constantine, who was far from having displayed the courage and energy with which his brother Nicholas had fronted the rebellion of the Guards in St Petersburg in 1825, despaired of the cause, and retired with the troops which still adhered to him, consisting of nine thousand men, including the whole Russians, the Polish Guards, and foot artillery, to Wirzba, a village a mile and a half from Warsaw, leaving the capital in the entire possession of the insurgents.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 60, 64; Ann. Hist. xiii. 656, 657; Cap. iv. 52, 54.

18. Appointment of a provisional government.

The insurgents had gained an immense advantage by obtaining command of the capital, and of the banks, arsenal, and seat of government; but they were without rulers, and the worst dangers might be apprehended if the people, now wrought up to the highest pitch, were not speedily subjected to some sort of government. Already conflagrations had broken out in several quarters, which were with difficulty arrested, and pillage had begun, and many murders been committed.

There existed at Warsaw, at this time, a council of government, which, in the absence of the Viceroy, was intrusted with the executive power, and to it the leaders of the insurrection turned to establish order in the mean time, and form the skeleton of a future government. This council, which consisted of seven members, including Prince Lubecki, who afterwards became distinguished, met during the frightful tumult of the night of the 29th, and resolved to continue its functions, in the hope of obtaining the direction of the movement; but in order to appease the people, and induce them to submit to their authority, they associated several of the most respected and popular of the nobles with them in the government. These were Prince Adam Czartoryski, Prince Michael Radziwil, the Senator Kochanowski, General Lewis Pac, M. Julian Niemcewicz, a celebrated writer, and companion of Kosciusko, and GENERAL CHLOPICKI. The known patriotic spirit and high character of these distinguished men gave a consideration to the government which it could never otherwise have obtained, and enabled it to acquire a degree of authority even over the stormy elements of a revolution.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 65, 68; Ann. Hist. xiii. 657; Cap. iv. 53, 57.

19. First act of the new government, and negotiation with Constantine. Nov. 30.

It could hardly be said, though Constantine had been driven from the capital, that the country was in a state of insurrection. The enlarged government still administered in the name of the Czar. A proclamation, issued by it on the day of its installation, earnestly counselled order, and abstinence from blood;* and its first care was to despatch a deputation to Constantine with proposals for an accommodation. The declared objects of the

* "Polonais! Les événemens aussi attristans qu'inopinés, qui ont eu lieu hier au soir, et pendant la dernière nuit, ont déterminé le Gouvernement supérieur à se compléter par des personnes de mérite, et à vous adresser la proclamation suivante. Son Altesse Impériale le Grand Duc et Czarowitz vient de défendre aux soldats Russes toute opération ultérieure; car il ne faut charger que les Polonais de la réconciliation entre les esprits divisés de leur compatriotes. Le Polonais ne doit pas teindre sa main du sang de son frère; et ce ne peut être votre intention de donner au monde le spectacle d'une guerre civile. C'est la modération seule qui peut détourner de vos têtes les malheurs

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insurgents, as stated by the deputation, which had Prince Czartoryski at its head, was to obtain the faithful establishment of the constitution as it had been established in 1815, and, in particular, the fulfilment of the promises of Alexander, that Lithuania, Volhynia, and Podolia should be incorporated with the kingdom of Poland, and detached from the empire of Russia. The deputation was instructed also to sound Constantine on his designs, and, in particular, to inquire whether the army of Lithuania, stationed on the Polish frontier, had received orders to advance towards Warsaw. He assured them, on his honour, that none such had been given, and evinced the utmost courtesy and respect towards the deputation. He even went so far as to assure them of his favour to the "culpable." "There are none such," proudly replied Ostrowski, one of the deputation.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 73, 74; Ann. Hist. xiii. 658, 659.

20. Constantine sends back the Polish troops, and retreats into Russia. Dec. 3.

It rested with the Emperor Nicholas, not Constantine, to say what terms were to be granted to the insurgents; but the latter, seeing the temper of the Polish troops which remained with him daily declaring itself more strongly in favour of the Revolution, had the generosity to issue a proclamation, granting permission to such of them as still adhered to his standard, to withdraw and join their comrades in Warsaw.* They set out one and all immediately for the capital, which they entered the same day amidst transports of joy such as had never before been witnessed within its walls. The nation

qui sont prêts à fondre sur vous. Revenez donc à l'ordre et à la tranquillité; que la nuit qui vient de se passer couvre de son voile toute l'effervescence qu'elle a vue naître. Réfléchissez à l'avenir et à votre patrie menacée de tous les côtés: Eloignez tout ce qui peut mettre son existence en question. Quant à nous, notre devoir nous prescrit de maintenir la tranquillité publique, les lois, et les libertés assurées au pays par la constitution."—*Warsaw*, 30th Nov., 1830; CAPEFIGUE, vol. iv. pp. 54, 55.

* "Je permets aux troupes Polonaises qui sont restées fidèles jusqu'au dernier moment auprès de moi, de rejoindre les leurs. Je me mets en marche avec les troupes Impériales pour m'éloigner de la capitale, et j'espère de la loyauté Polonaise, qu'elles ne seront pas inquiétées dans leurs mouvemens pour rejoindre l'empire. Je recommande de même tous les établissemens, les propriétés, et les individus à la protection de la nation Polonaise, et les mets sous la sauve-garde de la foi la plus sacrée.—CONSTANTINE. *Warsaw*, Dec. 3, 1830."

seemed invincible, now that the whole of its gallant defenders were engaged in its cause. Meanwhile Constantine, with the Russian troops, now not more than six thousand strong, retired by slow marches towards the frontier of Volhynia, without being molested in his retreat. He seemed more anxious about his adored princess, who fell dangerously ill on the road, from fatigue, hardship, and anxiety, than the loss of a vice-regal throne, second to none in the world for importance and splendour.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 75, 80; Ann. Hist. xiii. 659, 660.

21. Enthusiasm on the arrival of the Polish troops in Warsaw.

Meanwhile the provisional government, though still keeping up a negotiation with the Emperor Nicholas and his brother Constantine, were making considerable preparations for an appeal to arms. The enthusiasm of the people, which had been strongly excited by the arrival of the Polish corps from the Russian camp, commanded by Generals Szembek and SKRZYNECKI, on the 2d December, was roused to the highest pitch on the following day by the entrance of additional Polish troops from the camp of Mokotow. The soldiers broke from their ranks and embraced the citizens as they passed through the streets; the windows were all filled with elegantly-dressed ladies waving their handkerchiefs in the highest state of rapture; and every steeple rung forth a merry chime to usher in the approaching deliverance of their country. Yet, even in this moment of universal joy, symptoms of danger appeared, and it was too evident how nearly allied are overthrow of government and license to crime. General Krasinski, who had alone voted for the death of the prisoners implicated in the conspiracy of 1826[2] in Poland, marched in at the head of his regiment of Polish grenadiers of the Guard. He was immediately recognised; hisses and murmurs were heard; the mob fell upon him, and would have murdered him on the spot but for the efforts of Chlopicki and Szembek. The same fate awaited General Kurnatwski,[3] who had ordered the troops to fire on the people during the insurrection of the

[2] Ante, c. viii. § 136.

[3] Rom. Solt. i. 83, 85.

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29th. He was dragged from his horse, and the sabre was already at his throat, when he was saved by the earnest entreaties of Chlopicki.

22. Chlopicki seizes the dictatorship. Dec. 5.

Taking advantage of this universal enthusiasm, the administrative council began to take steps for the formation of a powerful national army. The Diet was convoked for the 18th December. A hundred thousand national guards were ordered to be put on permanent duty, and efforts made to raise corps of volunteers in various quarters. But this measure was far from corresponding to the ardent passions of the people, which were daily increasing, and soon reached such a point that the administrative council saw they were no longer able to stem or direct the torrent. They resigned accordingly, and a provisional government, composed of Prince Czartoryski, Kochanowski, Pac, Dembrowski, Niemcewicz, Lelewel, and Ladislaus Ostrowski, of their own authority, but with general consent, took possession of the government. It soon appeared, however, that a single authority was required,—disorders were increasing on all sides; and Chlopicki, who had been appointed commander-in-chief of the army and national guards, cut the matter short by declaring that he would accept the command on no other terms but that of being declared dictator. On the 5th December he suddenly entered the hall where the Government was sitting, and after breaking out into a violent invective against the disorders of the people, the fury of the clubs, and the insubordination of the army, he said, "It is time to put a period to these vacillations. The country, in such grave circumstances, stands in need of a man devoted to its cause, and who will watch over its interests. I take upon myself the dictatorship—a burden which I will relinquish with joy when the Diet meets."[1] Such was the universal sense of the necessity of the measure, that although these words were wholly unexpected, and excited at first unbounded astonishment, they

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 105, 106; Ann. Hist. xiii. 660, 661.

provoked no resistance, and Chlopicki assumed without opposition the functions of dictator.

1830. 23. Chlopicki: his biography and character.

It is one thing to assume the government of a country when it opens the prospect of a pacific or glorious reign; it is another, and a very different thing, when it seems the avenue only to danger, difficulty, and death. The seizure of power by Chlopicki proceeded from very different motives, and was a very different thing, from that of Napoleon. The character of the two men was not less opposite; unfortunately for Poland, their intellectual capacities were not less dissimilar. Chlopicki was a noble character,—a brave soldier, a devoted patriot, a great general; but he wanted the audacity and recklessness necessary for success in revolutions. Born of a noble but not illustrious family, he had entered the army in 1790, and made the disastrous campaign of 1794 under Kosciusko. After the fall of Poland in the close of that year, he entered the Polish Legion, which was organised in Italy under the orders of Dembrowski, and bore a part in all the glorious actions under Napoleon by which its career was distinguished. At the head of the 1st regiment of the Vistula he signalised himself in the campaigns of 1806 and 1807 in Prussia and Poland, and not less so in the chequered fields of Spain. In 1812 he was appointed general of brigade by Napoleon, and in that capacity was distinguished at the battles of Smolensko and Valoutino, in the last of which he was wounded. In 1814, when Poland fell again under the dominion of Russia, he had risen to the rank of general of division; but he quitted the service soon after the accession of Constantine to the viceroyalty, in consequence of an altercation with that irascible prince.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 100, 104.

Accustomed to military rules and subordination, Chlopicki had a perfect horror for conspiracies and the domination of clubs. Accordingly, he kept himself entirely clear of the great conspiracies of 1825 and 1826,

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connected with the insurrection in Russia in those years, and lived in retirement down to 1830. He was inspired with a thorough contempt for levies *en masse*, and all those devices by which the ardent but inexperienced in all ages endeavour to supply the want of regular soldiers. He dreaded the clubs of Warsaw even more than the Muscovite bayonets. It was his great object to achieve the liberation of his country and the establishment of its rights by other means than democratic fervour, which he considered as alike short-lived and perilous. Thus he was the man of all others least calculated to retain the suffrages of the clubs of Warsaw, which early acquired so great a weight in the revolution; and one of his first steps, after he became dictator, was to close them by a general military order. But he possessed an immense military reputation, and was known to have military talents of the very highest order, which rendered his sway over the soldiers unbounded; and as his patriotism was undoubted, and his character elevated and disinterested, his rule was for some time unresisted even by the burning democrats of the capital. He despised and detested them as much as Napoleon did the "*avocats et idéologues*" of Paris; and it was his great object, without their aid, and while retaining the direction of their movements, to work out the independence of Poland by negotiation with the Czar, and without coming to open rupture with his authority. But to achieve this object he was well aware that military preparations were indispensable, and his measures to attain this end, though not of the sweeping kind which the clubs demanded, were energetic and successful.[1]

24. His views in regard to the revolution.

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 104, 107.

25. Chlopicki's military preparations.

His first care was to organise a considerable increase to the regular army, which he effected by several decrees recalling all the old soldiers to their standards, and calling out the first bans of the levy *en masse*, embracing all persons between twenty and thirty years of age, which was estimated as producing eighty thousand men. Those from thirty to fifty, who were also to be enrolled, but not

moved from their homes, would, it was calculated, produce two hundred thousand more. The national guard of Warsaw alone was twenty thousand strong—an immense force in a city at that period containing not more than a hundred and forty thousand souls. The regular army was by this means raised to forty-five thousand men; and officers, though by no means in adequate numbers, were obtained for the national guard from the retired officers—nearly three thousand in number—who existed in Poland. At the same time, cannons were made with the metal of bells melted down, muskets were manufactured with the utmost rapidity, and considerable purchases of arms made in foreign states. Several battalions in the country were, in default of better weapons, armed with the scythes which they used in husbandry. Patriotic gifts flowed in on all sides; the ladies, even of the highest rank, were employed night and day in preparing bandages and sheets for the wounded; and considerable stores of ammunition and provisions were laid in by the Government. Everything, however, was done by the authority of and through the Government; and not only were several tenders of volunteer corps refused, but several free bands of some thousand horse, which had formed themselves in the forests, were disbanded. To this repression of the republican spirit at the outset of the insurrection, the patriotic writers of Poland ascribe much of the misfortunes which afterwards befell them; but, in the mean time, Chlopicki deemed himself more than compensated for its loss by the surrender of the fortresses of Modlin and Zamosc, which opened their gates at the first summons of the patriotic forces.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 661; Rom. Solt. i. 116, 140.

26. Strange conduct of Constantine.

While these events were in progress in Poland, Constantine, irresolute and dejected, was moving by slow marches towards Russia. A mutual intercourse of civilities took place between him and Chlopicki. The Polish dictator sent to the Grand-duke eight hundred Russian

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soldiers who had been surrounded and disarmed near Warsaw, without exchange; and the Grand-duke, in return, treated kindly and hospitably entertained such of the Polish troops as he met on the road to Russia, hastening to their respective corps. The strange character of the Prince strongly appeared on these occasions. "There," said he, "is another of my brave Polish soldiers: ah! the Polish army is the first in the world;" then, approaching the man, he would say, "*But your belts are not straight:* see that you put them on better the next time."* Then he would break out into the most violent invectives against the Polish troops for their ingratitude and shameful return for all his kindness, and conclude by again praising them, and dismissing them to a copious repast. The generals who surrounded him, if less generous, were more consistent in their language. Looking at the white ribbons and cockades, the national colour of Poland, which were on the breasts of the soldiers, they said, "You do well to mount white cockades, for they will show off the scarlet. They will soon be stained with your blood." [1]

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 94, 95.

27. Unsuccessful negotiations with Nicholas.

Clinging to the last to the hope of a reconciliation with the Czar, Chlopicki, soon after his seizure of the dictatorship, sent a deputation to St Petersburg, consisting of Prince Lubecki, the Minister of Finance, and Count Jezierski, to explain the causes of the insurrection, the

* "J'ai tout oublié," said the Grand-duke, "car je suis au fond meilleur Polonais que vous tous. Je suis marié à une Polonaise, je suis établi parmi vous. Je vous ai donné des preuves de mes sentimens en défendant aux troupes Impériales de tirer. Si j'avais voulu, on vous aurait anéantis dans le premier moment. J'étais le seul dans mon état-major qui voulût qu'on ne tirât pas; car j'ai pensé que dans une querelle Polonaise les Russes n'avaient rien à faire. J'aurais désiré que nous pussions entrer parmi vous; nous avons tous des liens bien chers à Varsovie; mais votre gouvernement m'a fait dire par la députation que je devais m'en aller ou me mettre à la tête des troupes Polonaises pour rentrer dans la capitale. J'ai refusé ce parti pour ne pas être rebelle à mon souverain: Jamais je ne jouerai le rôle du Prince d'Orange. Mais mon cœur a été navré, je l'avoue, et ce qui me peine le plus c'est que cette révolution a été teinte de sang, et marquée de rapines. La postérité accusera de barbarie cette armée et cette nation Polonaise que j'aimais tant, et fera peser cette tâche ineffaçable sur leur mémoire."—CAPEFIGUE, iv. 58, 59.

grounds of the Polish complaints, with the concessions which would convert them from determined rebels into faithful subjects. These were the same as those which were shortly after published to the world on each side, and shall be immediately given. They embraced chiefly three points: The union of the provinces of Lithuania, Volhynia, and Podolia with the kingdom of Poland, in conformity with the promises of Alexander; the strict observance of the Charter; and the removal of the Muscovite garrisons from the entire kingdom of Poland. But the envoys met with the coldest possible reception from the Emperor Nicholas. They who hoped to bend that soul of iron little knew him. With a stern air and a determined voice he reproached them with their treason and ungrateful oblivion of all his benefits, and threatened them with the last extremities of military vengeance if the insurrection were any longer persisted in. He warned them that "the first cannon-shot fired would be the signal of the ruin of Poland." At the same time, declaring that he knew how to distinguish the guilty from the innocent, he offered an unconditional amnesty to all except the leaders of the revolt, and those actually engaged in the murders at Warsaw. These terms were of course rejected, and the envoys having returned to Warsaw, and the substance of the conference been published in the papers there, the public effervescence was greatly increased, and all classes, seeing an accommodation hopeless, prepared with magnanimous resolution for the decisive conflict.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 662, 663; Rom. Solt. i. 114, 115.

28. Preparations and conference of Austria, Prussia, and Russia.

The neighbouring powers were far from being indifferent spectators of the revolution at Warsaw. No sooner did it break out than the Russian ambassadors at Vienna and Berlin inquired of these courts what would be the conduct of their cabinets if it terminated in a war. The answer was in the highest degree satisfactory. Austria and Prussia both declared that they would collect an army of observation on the frontiers,—the one of Gallicia, the other of the grand-

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duchy of Posen; and they both entered into the following engagement, which was rigorously acted upon during the war: "To permit no correspondence to pass from Poland through their dominions; to give no succour or assistance to the insurgents; to keep the harbours of Dantzic and Königsberg closed against all convoys of ammunition, of provisions, even if they should come from England or France; to sequestrate the funds belonging to the kingdom of Poland in the bank of Berlin, and place them at the disposal of the Emperor Nicholas; and should the revolt extend to Cracow, the grand-duchy of Posen, or Gallicia, immediately to unite their forces to those of the Emperor of Russia, to maintain in full force the treaties of 1814 and 1815, without paying any regard to the notes or menaces of France." The effect of this agreement was to surround the little kingdom of Poland on all sides with a hedge of bayonets, and leave it no chance of foreign succour in maintaining the contest with its gigantic enemy.[1]

[1] Cap. iv. 65.

29. Secret views of Austria and France at this juncture.

But although Austria and Prussia were thus to appearance united on the subject, and their measures were throughout the war entirely regulated by the policy thus agreed on, yet in reality there was a wide division between them, and little was wanting to have made the former of these powers take part with France and Poland in the contest. Had the efforts of the Poles been founded only on the principle of independence, and unconnected with the cause of revolution, she in all probability would have done so. The danger to Austria from the incorporation of the kingdom of Poland with the Russian empire, was so obvious and pressing that it overcame all the terrors of the cabinet of Vienna as to a revolutionary state. The Austrian consul, accordingly, in the first instance, did not leave Warsaw; and a secret negotiation was opened with the cabinet of Vienna, the result of which was, that Austria would not object to the restoration of the nationality of Poland, and even

to contribute to it by the abandonment of Gallicia, provided Poland would agree to accept as king a prince of the *house of Austria*, and that the whole arrangements were made with the concurrence of the cabinets of Paris and London. M. Walewski, accordingly, was charged with a mission to sound these two cabinets on the subject. He met with a favourable reception at the Tuileries, where he arrived in the beginning of March; but M. Casimir Périer, who had just succeeded to the lead in the French government, said he could do nothing without the concurrence of the cabinet of St James's.[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, ii. 448, 451.

30. Great Britain declines to join France in interfering in favour of Poland.

In consequence of this answer, M. Walewski came on to London, where he had some conferences with Lord Palmerston, then Minister for Foreign Affairs, on the subject. The hands of the English government, however, were sufficiently full at that time with the affairs of Belgium, in regard to which it was sufficiently difficult to keep the representatives of the five powers assembled in London at one. It was thought, therefore, and probably with justice, that if, in this unsettled state of the several cabinets, a fresh apple of discord were thrown amongst them, and Russia was irrevocably alienated by support given to Poland, the conference would at once be broken up, Belgium would be incorporated with France, and a general war would ensue, in which it was more than probable that, from their superior resources and state of preparation, the legitimate states would prevail over the revolutionary. The Polish envoy, therefore, was informed, with every expression of regret, that England could not interfere; and Poland, for the present at least, was left to its fate.* All that France did was to

* The note of the English government, in answer to the proposal of the French for an intervention in favour of Poland, was in these terms: "Le soussigné, en réponse à la note que lui a présentée l'ambassadeur de France, à l'effet d'engager le gouvernement Britannique à intervenir de concert avec la France dans les affaires de Pologne, par une médiation qui aurait pour but d'arrêter l'effusion de sang, et de procurer à la Pologne une existence politique et nationale, a l'honneur d'informer S. E. le Prince de Talleyrand, que malgré tous les désirs que pourrait avoir le roi de la Grande Bretagne de concourir

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send M. de Mortemart to St Petersburg to endeavour to obtain favourable terms for the Poles; but Nicholas gave him his answer by a significant motion of his hand across his throat, showing he was not unmindful of his father's fate, and which may be rendered by the familiar English phrase, "It is neck or nothing with me."[1]

[1] Louis Blanc, ii. 445, 451; Cap. v. 53.

31. Chlopicki resigns the dictatorship on the meeting of the Diet, 20th December, and is reappointed.

Faithful to his promise, Chlopicki resigned his dictatorship as soon as the Diet met, on the 20th December. So much had the benefit of his firm and intrepid hand been felt since the overthrow of the former government, on the 29th November, and so general was the hope among the more moderate that he might yet bring matters to an amicable arrangement with the Czar, that this resignation excited a great and general consternation. The Diet hastened, however, to allay it, by reappointing him, with full powers, civil and military, under this restriction only, that his powers were to cease when he was displaced by a commission named by the Diet itself. This appointment was made by a majority of 108 to 1, so that it had almost the weight of unanimity. It was

avec le roi des Français à toute démarche qui pourrait consolider la paix en Europe, surtout à celle qui aurait pour effet de faire cesser la guerre d'extermination dont la Pologne est aujourd'hui le théâtre, S. M. se voit forcée de décliner; qu'une médiation toute officieuse, vu l'état actuel des évènemens, ne pourrait pas manquer d'être refusée par la Russie, d'autant plus que le Cabinet de St Petersbourg vient de rejeter les offres de ce genre qui lui ont été faites par la France; que par conséquent l'intervention des deux cours, pour être effective, deverait avoir lieu de manière à être appuyée en cas de refus. Le roi d'Angleterre ne croit devoir adopter aucunement cette dernière alternative; l'influence que peut avoir la guerre sur la tranquillité des autres états, n'est pas telle qu'elle doive nécessiter ces démarches, et les relations franches et amicales qui existent entre la cour de St Petersbourg et S. M. ne lui permettant pas de les entreprendre. S. M. B. se voit donc forcée de décliner la proposition que vient de lui transmettre le Prince Talleyrand par sa note du 20 Juin, jugeant que *le tems n'est pas encore venu de pouvoir l'entreprendre avec succès*, contre le gré du souverain dont les droits sont incontestables. Pourtant S. M. charge le soussigné de témoigner à S. E. l'ambassadeur de France combien son cœur souffre de voir tous les ravages qui ont lieu en Pologne, et de lui assurer qu'elle fera tout ce que ses relations amicales avec la Russie lui permettront pour y mettre fin, et que déjà les instructions ont été données à l'ambassadeur de S. M. à St Petersbourg pour déclarer qu'elle tiendra à ce que l'existence politique de la Pologne, établie en 1815, ainsi que ses institutions nationales lui soient conservées. PALMERSTON. 25th June 1831."—L. BLANC, vol. ii. pp. 451, 452.

received with unbounded applause, the members embracing each other with tears of joy. The transports were increased when Chlopicki, amidst profound silence, with a noble air, but a voice trembling with emotion, said, "Gentlemen, I only accept the power with which you have invested me, with the firm intention to employ it for the good of the country: I will retain it only till it is your pleasure to resume it; then, obeying the commands of the nation, I will peaceably retire to my home, rich only in the approbation of a pure conscience, and proud of having consecrated my last efforts to the liberation of my unhappy country."[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 663, 664; Rom. Solt. i. 150, 156.

32. His first acts after his appointment.

Unbounded general enthusiasm succeeded this moving scene, and the patriotic efforts of the Poles were such as seemed to give a hope of success even against the colossal power of Russia, and unquestionably against any lesser state would have secured it. No less than 800,000 florins (£80,000) were next day subscribed for the service of the state by the citizens of Warsaw,—a prodigious sum in a city only containing a hundred and forty thousand inhabitants, and without manufactures or external commerce of any kind. Chlopicki added to the general enthusiasm by refusing for himself the salary of 200,000 florins (£20,000) a-year, which the decree of the Diet had attached to his office. The first act of Chlopicki, after his election, was to appoint a national council, consisting of Prince Czartoryski, Ladislaus Ostrowski, Prince Radziwil, Leon Dembrowski, the senator Kartellan, and the deputy Barzykowsky, to administer the government under him. At the same time, the utmost efforts were made to increase and render efficient the military force of the kingdom, which the official states published by the government made amount to 80,000 regular troops and 300,000 national guards. But it turned out that these estimates were greatly exaggerated, and the effective force in the field never amounted to a half of either of these numbers. Meanwhile powerful batteries were erected in

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front of Praga, and intrenchments begun around Warsaw, on the left bank of the Vistula, which proved of the utmost service in the last extremity of the nation. But though doing his utmost to augment the regular force, the dictator still declined all offers to form detached corps of volunteers, under the orders of partisan leaders, deeming the hazard of that species of force greater, in the excited state of the country, than any advantage that might be expected from it.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 664, 665; Rom. Solt. i. 157, 165.

33. Menacing proclamation, and vast preparations of the Czar. Dec. 31.

The Poles, however, had need of all their efforts and all their enthusiasm, for the forces which the Czar was accumulating against them were immense. An army of 110,000 men had already been collected in Lithuania, stationed in echelon along the road from St Petersburg to Warsaw. An animated proclamation, menacing to the Poles, was addressed by the Emperor to the Russian nation, in which he called on them to aid him in crushing their ancient enemies the Poles, who had made no other return for all the kindness they had received from Russia but treachery and treason.* Count Diebitch was appointed generalissimo, with the command, at the same time, of the governments of Grodno, Wilna, Minsk, Podolia, Volhynia, and Bialystok, which were all declared in a state

* "Une infame trahison a ébranlé le royaume de Pologne uni à la Russie, des hommes malintentionnés qui n'ont pas discerné les bienfaits du restaurateur de leur patrie, le magnanime Empereur Alexandre d'éternelle mémoire, et qui, jouissant sous la protection des lois octroyées, du fruit de sa bienveillance, ourdirent en secret des intrigues pour renverser l'ordre qu'il avait établi, et choisirent le 29 Novembre pour commencer l'accomplissement de leurs desseins par la rébellion. . . . Le peuple Polonais, qui, après tant d'infortunes, jouissait de la paix et du bien-être à l'ombre de notre puissance, se précipite de nouveau dans l'abîme de la révolte et des calamités, et un ramas d'êtres crédules, quoique déjà saisis d'effroi à la pensée du châtiment qui les attend, osent rêver quelques instans la victoire, et nous proposer des conditions, à nous, leur maître légitime. Russes! vous savez que nous les repoussons avec indignation. Vos cœurs, brûlant de zèle pour les intérêts du trône, comprennent tout ce que le nôtre éprouve. A la première nouvelle de trahison, votre réponse fut un serment répété d'inébranlable fidelité, et dans ce moment nous ne voyons qu'un mouvement dans toute l'étendue de notre vaste empire, dans le cœur de chacun vit un seul sentiment, le vœu de ne redouter aucun effort pour l'honneur de son empereur, pour l'inviolabilité de l'empire, et d'y sacrifier sa fortune et même sa vie. NICHOLAS. Dec. 24, 1830."—*Ann. Hist.*, vol. xiii. p. 179. *Doc. Hist. de Partie.*

of war; and a few days after, Diebitch, who added the proud title of Sabalkansky to his name, set out for the army, attended by a numerous and magnificent staff, in the full confidence that to the surname of *Passer of the Balkan* he would soon add that of Conqueror of Warsaw. The ancient and unforgotten animosity of the Russians against the Poles appeared in the strongest manner on this occasion. One only feeling existed in the whole nation, which was, that they must strain every nerve to crush the traitors; and great as was the enthusiasm of the Poles to regain their independence, it was equalled by the ardour of the Muscovites to retain them in subjection.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 666.

34. Manifesto of the Polish Diet.

Before throwing away the scabbard, the Polish Diet, on January 10, 1831, addressed a manifesto to the other nations of Europe. It was stated in that noble document: "The world knows too well the infamous machinations, the vile calumnies, the open violence and secret treasons which have accompanied the three dismemberments of ancient Poland. History, of which they have become the property, has stigmatised them as political crimes of the deepest dye. The solemn grief which that violence has spread through the whole country, has caused the feelings of nationality to be preserved without interruption. The Polish standard has never ceased to wave at the head of the Polish legions; and in their military emigration, the Poles, transporting from country to country their household gods, have never ceased to cry aloud against this violation; and yielding to the noble illusion, which, like every noble thought, has not been deceived, they trusted that, in combating for the cause of liberty, they were combating also for their own country.

35. Continued.

"That country has risen from its ashes, and, though restrained within narrow limits, Poland has received from the hero of the last age its language, its rights, its liberties,—gifts in themselves precious, but rendered doubly so

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by the hopes with which they were accompanied. From that moment his cause has become ours, our blood become his inheritance; and when our allies, and Heaven itself, seemed to have abandoned him, the Poles shared the disasters of the hero; and the fall together of a great man and an unfortunate nation extorted the involuntary esteem of the conquerors themselves. That sentiment produced a deep impression; the sovereigns of Europe, in a moment of danger, promised to the world a durable peace; and the Congress of Vienna in some sort softened the evils of our unhappy country. A nationality and entire freedom of internal commerce were guaranteed to all parts of ancient Poland, and that portion of it which the strife of Europe had left independent, though mutilated on three sides, received the name of a kingdom, and was put under the guardianship of the Emperor Alexander, with a constitutional charter and the hope of future extension. In performance of these stipulations he gave a liberal constitution to the kingdom, and held out to the Poles under his immediate government the hope of being ere long reunited to their severed brethren. These were not gratuitous promises: he had contracted anterior obligations to us, and we, on our side, had made corresponding sacrifices. In proclaiming himself *King of Poland*, the Emperor of Russia was only faithful to his promises.

36. Continued.

"But the hopes inspired by these circumstances proved as short-lived as they were fallacious. The Poles were ere long convinced, by dear-bought experience, that the vain title of Poland, given to the kingdom by the Emperor of Russia, was nothing but a lure thrown out to their brothers, and an offensive arm against the other states. They saw that, under cover of the sacred names of liberty and independence, he was resolved to reduce the nation to the lowest point of degradation and servitude. The measures pursued in regard to the army first revealed this infamous design. Punishments the

most excruciating, pains the most degrading, were, under pretence of keeping up military discipline, inflicted, not for faults of commission, but mere omission. The arbitrary disposition of the commander-in-chief, his absolute control over the courts-martial, soon rendered him the absolute master of the life and honour of every soldier. Numbers in every grade have sent in their resignations, and committed suicide in despair at the degrading punishments to which they had been subjected. The deliberative assembly, from which so much was expected, has remedied none of these evils, it has rather aggravated them; for it has brought, in a sensible form, the reality of servitude home to the nation. The liberty of the press, the publication of debates, was tolerated only so long as they resounded with strains of adulation; but the moment that the real discussion of affairs commenced, the most rigid censorship of the press was introduced, and after the sittings of the Diet closed, they prosecuted the members of it for the opinions they had expressed in it.

37. Continued.

"The union, on one head, of the crown of the Autocrat and of the constitutional King of Poland, is one of those political monstrosities which could not by possibility long endure. Every one foresaw that the kingdom of Poland must be to Russia the germ of liberal institutions, or itself perish under the iron hand of its despot. That question was soon resolved. If Alexander ever entertained the idea of reconciling the extent of his despotic power with the popularity of liberal institutions amongst us, it was but for a moment. He soon showed by his acts that the moment he discovered that liberty would not become the blind instrument of slavery, he was to be its most violent persecutor. That system was soon put in execution. Public instruction was first corrupted; it was made the mere instrument of despotism: an entire palatinate was next deprived of its representatives in the council,—the Chambers of the power of voting on the budget; new taxes were imposed without their authority: monopolies

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destructive of industry were created; and the treasury became a mere fountain of corruption, from whence, in lieu of the retrenchment which the nation had so often solicited, pensions and gratuities were distributed with the most scandalous profusion amongst the supporters of Government. Calumny and *espionage* soon invaded the privacy and destroyed the happiness of domestic life; the ancient hospitality of the Poles was converted into a snare for innocence. Individual liberty, so solemnly guaranteed, was every day violated; the prisons were filled, and courts-martial, proceeding to take cognisance of civil offences, inflicted infamous and degrading punishments on citizens whose only fault was to have endeavoured to stem the torrent of corruption which overspread the country.

38. Concluded.

"In the ancient provinces of Poland now incorporated with Russia, matters have been still worse. Not only have they not been incorporated with Poland, in violation of the promise to that effect made by the Emperor Alexander to the Congress of Vienna, but, on the contrary, everything has been systematically done which could eradicate in them any sentiment or recollection of nationality. The youths at school have been in an especial manner the object of persecution. All who were suspected of a leaning towards liberal or patriotic sentiments were torn from their mothers' arms, and sent off to Siberia, or compelled to enter the army as private soldiers, though belonging to the first families in the country. In all administrative or public acts the Polish language was suppressed, as well as in the common schools; imperial ukases annihilated alike the Polish rights and tribunals; the abuses of administration reduced the landed proprietors to despair. Since the accession of the Emperor Nicholas, all these evils have rapidly increased, and intolerance, coming to the aid of despotism, has left nothing undone to extirpate the Catholic worship, and force the Greek ritual in its stead."[1]

[1] Manifesto des Peuple Polonais, Jan. 10, 1830; Ann. Hist. xiii. 180, 182; Doc. Hist.

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When such were the feelings and manifestoes on the opposite side, there was evidently little chance of an accommodation without an appeal to arms. But Chlopicki still clung to the hope of a pacific arrangement, relying partly on the great danger to Russia of a war of *races*, if once fairly roused, and embracing the whole Sarmatian family, partly on the magnanimous disposition which their flatterers generally ascribe, though seldom with justice, to absolute sovereigns. He continued to address Nicholas, accordingly, in terms of the most profound respect, adjuring him in the most touching terms to take pity on a gallant people, whom he could by a word raise up to the summit of happiness from the depths of woe.* But it was all in vain. The mind of Nicholas, lofty and magnanimous, but stern and unrelenting, was incapable of succumbing before difficulties; and even if he had been disposed individually to accede to the entreaties of the Poles, it was no longer in his power to do so. Public opinion is on great occasions not less irresistible in Russia than in England; and, when thoroughly roused, it makes itself heard in a still more decisive way, for its instruments are armed men, not pacific legislators, and its appeal in the last resort is not to the press, but to the bowstring. The national feelings of the Russians were so thoroughly roused by the revolt of their ancient enemies the Poles, that it would have cost the Czar his throne and his life if he had entered into any compromise with them. Absolute, unconditional surrender was therefore sternly insisted on; and as the Diet could not hear

39. Chlopicki's vain efforts to bring about an accommodation.

* "Plein de confiance dans la magnanimité de votre cœur, Sire, j'ose espérer qu'une effusion de sang n'aura pas lieu, et je me regarderai comme le plus heureux d'hommes si je puis atteindre au but que je me propose par la réunion intime de tous les élémens de bon ordre et de force. Sire, en ma qualité d'ancien soldat et de bon Polonais, j'ose vous faire entendre la vérité, et je suis persuadé que V. M. J. et R. daignera l'écouter. Vous tenez, Sire, dans votre main les destinées de toute une nation; d'un seul mot vous pouvez la mettre au comble du bonheur, d'un seul mot la précipiter dans un abîme de maux."—CHLOPICKI *to the* EMPEROR NICHOLAS, 29th Dec. 1830; *Ann. Hist.*, vol. xiv. p. 174. *App. Doc. Hist.*

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of this, both sides prepared for war. Upon this Chlopicki resigned the dictatorship, declaring his readiness to serve his country as a private soldier. "If," said he, "your conscience permits you with so much ease to break the oaths you have taken to your lawful sovereign, it is well. I feel differently. All that I do here is in the name of Nicholas. I resign the dictatorship."[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 175, 178.

40. The Czar is dethroned by the Diet. Jan. 21, 1831.

The Diet met on the 19th of January 1831, to determine on the momentous question of peace or war. All minds were made up upon it; but the deliberations of the Diet were such as befitted the solemnity of the occasion, and were worthy of a gallant people courageously making, in circumstances all but desperate, the last struggle for their independence. "Poles," said Prince Czartoryski, the president, "our cause is sacred, our fate depends on the Most High; but we owe it to ourselves to transmit intact to posterity the honour of the nation enshrined in our hearts: 'concord, courage, perseverance,' such is the sacred motto which can alone insure the glory of our country. Let us put forth all our strength, in order to found for ever our liberty and national independence." On the 21st January the Diet conferred the command of the army on Prince Radziwil in lieu of Chlopicki, who received the perilous trust with these words: "I only accept the command in order to hold it till the war has raised one of those great men who save nations. My sole wish is for the independence and happiness of our beloved country. Such I have been—such I ever shall be." Then, on the motion of Roman Soltyk, the Diet *unanimously* passed a resolution deposing the Czar and his whole family from the throne, and absolving the Polish nation from their oath of fidelity to the reigning sovereign, and the *whole assembly* of both Chambers, amidst enthusiastic cheers, signed the Act of Dethronement.[2] *

Jan. 21.

[2] Rom. Solt. i. 241, 247; Ann. Hist. xiv. 485, 487.

* "Les traités les plus sacrés et les plus inviolables, ne sont obligatoires qu'autant qu'ils sont observés fidèlement. Nos longues souffrances sont connues

Statistics of the strength of Russia at this period.

Before proceeding to recount the memorable war which ensued on the banks of the Vistula, and which cast a last ray of glory on the long annals of Polish heroism, it is essential to state the comparative strength of the two nations who then entered into the lists. Such a detail, how brief soever, will add much to the fame of the vanquished, and take somewhat from that of the conquerors. Fortunately, a statistical survey of the whole Russian dominions,* made in this very year, has

du monde entier. La violation, tant de fois renouvelée, des libertés qui nous avaient été garanties par les sermens de deux monarques, délie également aujourd'hui la nation Polonaise du serment de fidélité qu'elle a prêté à son souverain. Les paroles propres enfin de l'Empereur Nicolas, qui a dit que le premier coup de fusil tiré de notre part, deviendrait le signal de la ruine de la Pologne, nous ôtent toute espérance de voir nos griefs réparés, et ne nous laissent plus qu'un noble désespoir.

"La Nation Polonaise, réunie en diète, déclare donc qu'elle forme désormais un peuple indépendant, qu'elle a le droit *de donner la couronne Polonaise* à celui qu'elle en jugera digne, à celui qu'elle jugera capable d'observer fidèlement la loi qu'il aura jurée, et de conserver intactes les libertés nationales.—Le Prince Adam Czartoryski, Président du Senat; Le Comte Ostrowski, Maréchal de la Chambre des Nonces; et tous les Membres du Sénat et de la Chambre des Nonces."—*Ann. Hist.*, vol. xiv. p. 488.

* The details were as follows of the inhabitants:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Russia Proper, | 43,700,000 |
| Finland, | 1,250,000 |
| Kingdom of Poland, | 4,050,000 |
| Georgia, and to south of Caucasus, | 1,200,000 |
| Cossacks, Calmucks, &c., | 743,587 |
| Siberia, | 400,000 |
| | 51,343,587 |

The revenue was raised thus:—

| | Rubles. |
|---|---|
| Capitation, | 15,000,000 |
| Crown peasants' capitation, | 17,500,000 |
| Levied on merchants, | 900,000 |
| Custom-house, | 12,500,000 |
| Monopoly of spirits, | 22,500,000 |
| Salt tax, | 2,000,000 |
| Mines, | 2,500,000 |
| Mint, | 2,000,000 |
| Stamps, | 1,750,000 |
| Miscellaneous, | 1,500,000 |
| *Revenue unknown*, | 21,850,000 |
| | 100,000,000, or £16,000,000 |

—*Ann. Hist.*, vol. xiv. p. 647.

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furnished the materials of both with perfect accuracy. The Russian population at this time, including the Poles, amounted to 51,343,000 souls; without the latter, to 47,300,000; and its revenue was 100,000,000 rubles, or £16,000,000 sterling. Of this immense multitude 17,555,089 were free peasants on the crown-lands, or those of individuals; 18,781,812 were serfs, for whom the capitation-tax was paid; and 747,557 were on the rolls of the army.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiii. 647.

42. Statistics of the kingdom of Poland.

Inconsiderable when compared to these gigantic forces, the material strength of the fragment of Poland which was in the hands of Russia, and engaged in the war, was yet very large, considering its limited extent and number of inhabitants. The kingdom embraced at this period 4,050,000 inhabitants, of whom Warsaw alone contained 140,000, being an increase of 50,000 souls over its numbers in 1814. The revenue of the state amounted to 80,000,000 Polish florins, or £2,000,000 sterling, a national income by no means contemptible in a country where money was so scarce that the wages of rural labour were 3d. a-day in winter, and 4d. in summer. The national bank had a treasure of 120,000,000 florins (£3,000,000), and a reserve of 20,000,000 florins (£500,000) was in the public treasury. These considerable resources in a country wholly agricultural, and not exceeding in extent the surface of Ireland, were the result of the peace and protection to industry which, despite all the rigour of the Muscovite rule, it had enjoyed under its firm government. No other testimony to this is required than that of the historian of the revolution, and the man who had the courage in the Diet to make the motion for the dethronement of the Emperor. "In general," says Roman Soltyk, "the public credit was firmly established, manufactures were arising on all sides, and their produce *since* 1815 *had increased ten-fold.* Excellent roads facilitated transport in every direction, and establishments of bene-

ficence, monuments of the arts, and splendid edifices were arising on all sides in the capital. Nor had the kingdom of Poland alone shared in this material prosperity; the little republic of Cracow possessed now 120,000 inhabitants, and enjoyed a revenue of 2,000,000 florins (£50,000).[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 18, Introduction.

43. Statistics of Austrian and Prussian Poland.

The population and resources of the provinces of Old Poland, acquired on the different partitions by Austria and Prussia, were more considerable; and if they could have been rendered available, the contest would have been less unequal. Gallicia had greatly increased in population and resources since it was ceded to Austria in 1772; it numbered now 4,000,000 of inhabitants, and rendered to the government of Vienna 60,000 excellent soldiers. The salt mines in the Carpathian mountains yielded the government a profit of 30,000,000 florins (£750,000) annually; the revenue amounted to 90,000,000 more (£2,250,000); and although this large revenue was generally felt as oppressive, yet it was tolerably well paid; and 500 leagues of roads had been made through the territory, which opened up markets in every direction to the produce of the industry of its inhabitants. The grand-duchy of Posen was in a still more flourishing condition. The wise policy of the Prussian government had been to extirpate the national feelings of its Polish subjects by a gentle administration and experienced benefits. Predial servitude was in course of being abolished; property was much subdivided; roads and canals had been constructed; manufactures and machinery had been introduced in some places, and agriculture had flourished to an extraordinary degree. Considerable immigration of German settlers had taken place into its fields, and many sturdy Poles had left them, and settled in the kingdom of Poland, in anticipation of the re-establishment of Polish nationality. Provincial assemblies were established, and the Polish language was no longer used in public instruments.[2] The population amounted to 2,000,000 souls,

[2] Rom. Solt i. 19, 20.

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and yielded a revenue of 40,000,000 florins (£1,000,000) to the government of Berlin.

44. Statistics of Lithuania and Russian Poland.

The vast territories which in the different partitions had fallen to the lot of Russia, viz. Lithuania, Volhynia, Podolia, the Ukraine, and White Russia, were far from presenting so satisfactory an aspect. Asiatic despotism pressed with its iron hand upon their immense natural springs of prosperity. The population of the whole provinces did not exceed 9,000,000 inhabitants, being a very small increase upon what it had been at the partitions; and, notwithstanding the marvellous fertility of the greater part of their soil, the revenue they yielded was only 50,000,000 florins (£1,250,000). In addition to this, the Polish provinces which had been conquered by Russia before the first partition, viz. Smolensko, Tchernigov, and Starodub, contained 2,000,000 of inhabitants, but they had been so long dismembered from old Poland that their inhabitants had been almost naturalised in Russia. Predial servitude, in all its severity, pressed on these magnificent provinces; the industry of the country was languid, that of cities in its infancy; commerce of every kind in the interior was entirely in the hands of the Jews, who made a lucrative profit of the labour or simplicity of the peasants; and the grain trade of the southern provinces, which had formerly been the main source of the riches of Athens and Venice, was scarcely felt, from want of internal communication, beyond a circuit of seventy miles around Odessa. These provinces were still governed by the ancient Lithuanian code, mingled with Russian ukases; but even in their rude state they presented immense resources in men and horses; and as the Russian domination was to the last degree hated over their whole extent, much might be expected from them, if opportunity could be afforded for shaking off the authority of the Czar.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 19, 20.

The military resources of the contending parties, though disproportionate, were not so much so as might at

first sight have been expected, from the immense difference in their material resources. On the side of the Poles, 14,000 old soldiers had repaired to their standards, and increased the regular army to 42,000 infantry and 9400 cavalry; the artillery, consisting of 126 pieces manned by 2500 gunners, and 4000 new levies, presented a total of 58,500 combatants, all regular soldiers, brave, admirably disciplined, and animated by the highest spirit. From this, however, was to be deducted 10,000 men for the garrisons of Praga, Zamosc, and Modlin, and 4500 on detachment, so that not more than 44,000 men could be calculated upon for active service in the field. There was, it is true, a reserve which had been decreed, which was expected to produce 47,600 men; but the greater part of these were still unequipped when the war broke out, and the whole were very imperfectly disciplined. On the other hand, the Russian army, which had been by great exertions collected on the frontiers of Lithuania, under the orders of Field-Marshal Diebitch, consisted of 110,620 men, with 396 pieces, of which no less than 23,500 were regular and 4500 Cossack cavalry.[1]

45. Military forces on the opposite sides.

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 259, 272; Ann. Hist. xiv. 489.

When the disproportion between the opposite parties was so great, it seems almost impossible that the contest could have been of more than a few weeks' duration; nevertheless, it lasted nine months, was often very nearly balanced, and at last determined only by the active intervention of Prussia in favour of the Muscovite forces. The reason is to be found not merely in the valour of the Polish army, or the ability of their generals, great as they undoubtedly were, but in the military advantages of their situation. Small as the Polish forces were, they had the advantage, like those of Frederick the Great in the Seven Years' War, or Napoleon in Champagne in 1814, of being concentrated: vast as the legions of the Muscovites were, they laboured under the disadvantage, like those of the Allies on both these occasions, of being dis-

46. Strategetical advantages of the Poles.

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persed. The Polish troops, concentrated in a space not much larger than Yorkshire, rested on the fortresses of Warsaw, Zamosc, and Modlin, which were sufficiently fortified to be beyond the reach of a *coup-de-main;* while the Vistula, which flowed through its centre, gave them the advantage of water-carriage, and all the bridges over it were in their hands. On the other hand, the Russians, spread over a space of four hundred miles in breadth, from Kowno to Wlodzernierz, were at an immense distance from their magazines and resources, and this distance increased every mile they advanced into the Polish territory. The military resources of the empire had been strained to the uttermost, to produce the army under Diebitch on the frontier; and from the vast distance of the reserves in the interior, no reinforcements of consequence could be looked for for a very considerable time. Add to this, that if the Polish partisans could succeed in lighting up the flames of civil war in Lithuania, Volhynia, and Podolia, they might turn the resources of nine millions of Russian subjects against their enemies, and more than double their own. In these circumstances, much would obviously come to depend on the Russians striking a decisive blow in the outset, and, taking advantage of their immense numerical superiority, to destroy the Polish power before it had an opportunity of extending the flame of the insurrection into their own dominions.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 264, 271; Ann. Hist. xiv. 489.

47. Advance of Diebitch towards Warsaw. Feb. 5-7.

Diebitch broke up from his quarters in Lithuania on the 5th February, and advanced in three columns towards Warsaw. The right wing, under Generals Szachoffskoi and Manderstein, twenty thousand five hundred strong, entered the Polish territory by Kowno and Grodno, so celebrated in the wars of Napoleon. The left, ten thousand strong, consisting almost entirely of cavalry, with forty-eight guns, under General Geismar, debouched by Wlodawa, and moved upon Lukow and Lublin; while the centre, eighty thousand strong, with two hundred and eighty guns, under Diebitch in person, and divided into

four corps, under the orders of General Pahlen, Rosen, the Grand-duke Constantine, and General Dewitt, advanced by Tykoczyn, on the direct road to Warsaw. The whole of these troops were admirably organised, and provided with everything necessary for an active campaign. Unable to contend against forces so immense, Radziwil wisely retired, without attempting any resistance, towards the capital, in the hope that the invaders might be weakened by the waste and fatigues of the march, as Napoleon had been in the advance to Moscow, and that an opportunity might occur near Warsaw for engaging the enemy on terms more nearly approaching to equality.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 269, 272; Ann. Hist. xiv. 489, 490.

48. Position and forces on the opposite sides.

But the dimensions of the kingdom of Poland were very different from those of the empire of Russia, and the Poles soon found that they had retreated as far as was possible, and that a stand must be made to defend the capital. No serious resistance was experienced at the passage of the Bug, and the Polish army, gradually retiring, but in perfect order, took post, on the evening of the 18th February, a league in advance of Warsaw, near the village of GROCHOW. The forces on the opposite sides, though still disproportionate, were not so much so as might have been anticipated from the great difference between them which existed at the opening of the campaign. Diebitch had not more than seventy-four thousand men, as his centre and part of the wings alone was in the field; while the army of Radziwil had been raised, by reinforcements drawn from the national guards and depots, to forty-eight thousand men. But the Russians had a great superiority in artillery, which amounted to two hundred and seventy-six pieces, while the Poles had only one hundred and twenty-six. The Russian army was divided into two columns: the right, twenty-seven thousand strong, was under the orders of Rosen; the left, of no less than fifty thousand combatants, was under Count Pahlen and General Dewitt. The Polish army was drawn up in battle array in front of the woods

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which environ the village of Grochow: the right, under Szembek, rested on the marshes which adjoin the Vistula; the centre, under Radziwil in person, occupied in force the great road to Warsaw; the left, under Skrzynecki, extended as far as the village of Grodzisk. The cavalry, with the exception of three regiments which occupied that village, was all in reserve behind the infantry. The Russians had the advantage of the position, for they had the forest in rear, in which their columns would find shelter in case of disaster; while the Poles, with their backs to the Vistula, traversed by the single bridge of Praga, were exposed to total ruin in the event of defeat.[1]

1 Rom. Solt. i. 270, 280; Ann. Hist. xiv. 489, 490.

49. Battle of Grochow. Feb. 19.

The battle commenced at ten in the morning, by an attack by Pahlen, who debouched from the forest by the great road, and, turning to the left, attacked Szembek's men; but he was received with so warm a fire from the Polish right, that his troops fell into confusion, and a charge from the Polish hussars, who were brought up from the rear, drove them back headlong into the wood. Upon this Rosen's corps, which had by this time debouched from the wood, advanced to its aid, and took Szembek's corps, which had advanced considerably in pursuit of Pahlen's men from the ground it had occupied at the commencement of the action, in flank. In consequence Szembek fell back to his original ground; and, as the whole Russian army had by this time got clear of the wood, and deployed in its front, directly opposite to the Poles, the battle became general along the whole line. Diebitch, taking advantage of his immense superiority in men and guns, made the utmost efforts to force the centre, where the great road to Warsaw passed through both armies; but although above a hundred pieces of cannon were brought to bear on that point, to which the Poles could not oppose more than half the number, the Russians were unable to gain any decisive advantage.[2] The Poles fought with the most heroic resolution, and although, towards the evening, after combating all day, they lost a

2 Diebitch's Despatch, Feb. 21, 1831; Ann. Hist. xiv. 490; Rom. Solt. i. 280, 282.

few hundred yards of ground, yet, when the firing ceased, their ranks were unbroken, their courage unsubdued, and they had lost neither prisoners, cannon, nor standards in the fight.

50. Battle of Praga. Feb. 24 and 25.

To have maintained so obstinate a conflict with forces so superior was not less honourable to the Polish arms than advantageous to their cause; but the Russians were numerous, ably led, and inured to victory; and as they had driven the enemy a short distance from the field of battle, they attributed to themselves, not without reason, the advantage. The resistance of the Poles, however, had been so obstinate that Diebitch did not venture to renew the offensive till he had called up his whole right wing, which again raised his forces to nearly 80,000 men. Radziwil, on his side, had also repaired his losses, though chiefly with new levies, little inured to discipline. In making the movement from the Russian right to its centre, where Diebitch was concentrating his forces, the Russian division Szachoffskoi was attacked and worsted by the Poles under Krukowieckski, but they nevertheless continued their march, and by nightfall were in line with Diebitch in front of the Polish army, which maintained its old position in front of PRAGA. There it was attacked on the following day by the Russians in the same position which it had occupied on the 20th, with this difference, that SKRZYNECKI with his division was in the centre, and the left, under Zimirski and Krukowieckski, were on the left, and occupied in strength a little wood which had been obstinately contested in the preceding action, and became the theatre of a still more murderous conflict in that which succeeded.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 490, 491; Rom. Solt. i. 287, 288.

51. Desperate and bloody nature of the conflict.

The battle began at daybreak, and continued with the utmost obstinacy and various success the whole day. There was little generalship or manœuvring on either side: like Waterloo in former years, it was a regular stand-up fight between two gallant nations; like Inkermann in after days, it was a stand-up fight rather than a battle

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of manœuvres. The principal efforts of both parties were directed to get possession of the little wood on the Polish left, and it was repeatedly carried and again lost during the strife. At length, after a bloody conflict of two hours' duration, it was carried by Diebitch, who succeeded in bringing eighty pieces of cannon to bear upon it, and fairly shelled the Poles out. Some of his aides-de-camp having come to Chlopicki, who commanded there, to ask for orders, he replied, "Go and ask Radziwil; for myself, I only seek death." He did not find it, but was soon after severely wounded, and carried off the field of battle in an insensible state. General Zimirski, who tried to regain the wood, soon after fell, desperately wounded; and Szachoffskoi, who had now effected his junction with the general-in-chief, succeeded in establishing himself in it in a durable manner. The Polish army, disheartened by the loss of its chiefs, now fell back on all sides, and took post under the cannon of Praga, still, however, maintaining an undaunted front, and without sustaining any loss in prisoners or cannon. Diebitch endeavoured to convert the retreat into a rout by a vigorous attack of cuirassiers in the centre, but it led to a signal disaster. The Russian horse, by a headlong charge, succeeded in forcing their way through the Polish centre; but, pursuing their advantage, they came within the range of the batteries of Praga, which opened a tremendous fire upon them, and while recoiling in disorder from the terrific cannonade, they were charged in flank by a brigade of Polish cavalry under General Kicki, and almost totally destroyed. The Polish generals, however, fearful of having the bridge of boats in their rear cut off by the swelling of the Vistula, retreated at night into Warsaw, leaving Praga occupied by a strong rearguard.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 289, 291; Ann. Hist. xiv. 490, 491.

Such were the desperate battles of Grochow and Praga, which signalised the commencement of this terrible strife; and though they terminated, upon the whole,

to the disadvantage of the Poles, since they were driven back into Warsaw, yet they conferred more honour on the vanquished than the victors, and presaged a frightful contest before the conflict could be terminated. The loss on the opposite sides was nearly equal. The Poles were weakened by eight thousand men, the Russians by ten thousand. Few prisoners, and no guns or colours, were taken on either side, which, considering the prolonged and obstinate nature of the battles, sufficiently evinced the courage and resolution which had been displayed on both sides. The Poles might with reason attribute to themselves, upon the whole, the advantage, since, though driven from the open country, their army in unbroken strength still held the capital; the Vistula had not been passed at any point; Warsaw was not even invested; the *tête-de-pont* of Praga was still in their hands, which enabled them to debouch at pleasure on the right bank, and the first effort of a hundred thousand Russians had failed in crushing less than half that number of their opponents. On the other hand, though the Poles had inflicted a loss on their adversaries greater than they themselves had sustained, their own loss was the more sensibly felt, from the inferior strength of their army, and less considerable resources from which it might be recruited.[1]

52. Results of these battles.

[1] Ann. Reg. xiv. 490. 491; Rom. Solt. i. 287, 288.

While these dreadful battles were signalising the commencement of the war on the Russian right and centre, a most brilliant success attended the opening of the campaign on the Polish right. There Dwernicki, with not more than two thousand eight hundred foot and horse, and six guns, was left to make head against Geismar, who had nine thousand three hundred horse and forty-eight pieces of horse-artillery under his orders. It seemed scarcely possible for the weaker party, with such a disproportion, to avoid destruction; nevertheless, such was the talent of the Polish general, and the heroism of his followers, that he achieved the most brilliant success. Geismar's great superiority of force induced him to form

53. Splendid success of Dwernicki on the Polish right.

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the design of surrounding his opponent, and with this view he arranged his troops into two columns—the first of which, consisting of 4480 horse and twenty-four guns, met Dwernicki on the 13th February, who had crossed the Vistula on the ice near Sieroczyn. The second column, which was intended to attack the Poles in flank and rear, was sent round by a circuit, at such a distance as to be unable to lend aid to the first in a sudden fight; but as each column was of greater strength than the whole Poles, it was thought there was no danger in making the division. But Geismar little knew the quality of the troops with whom he had to deal; and Dwernicki, with the eye of a real general, instantly resolved to assume the offensive, and attack the one division before the other came up. Forming his horse, which consisted only of nine squadrons, about one thousand strong, into two columns, he charged Geismar's men with the utmost vigour, who awaited the attack with their twenty-four guns advantageously placed in battery. Such was the vigour of the Polish horse, whose exploits rivalled those of the Paladins of former days, that both attacks proved entirely successful. In a few minutes the first column routed the cavalry opposed to it, and took three guns; while the second, disregarding the showers of grape which fell upon them, threw themselves on the guns, captured eight, and, passing through them, charged twelve Russian squadrons drawn up behind, with such impetuosity that they were totally routed, and their commander slain by a sabre-stroke from Lieut. Dunin, one of Dwernicki's aides-de-camp. Upon this the whole Russian division took to flight, leaving in the hands of the Poles eleven guns and three hundred and eighty prisoners, taken in fair fight, besides four hundred killed and wounded.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 295, 300.

It is a curious circumstance, indicative of the lasting impress which nature has put upon all the families of the European race compared with the Asiatic, that these battles of Grochow and Sieroczyn bear the closest resem-

blance to those of Inkermann and Balaklava in after times. The Poles resisted the enormous masses of the Russians with the same intrepidity and firmness, in front of Praga, that the English did their assailants, five times their own number, in front of Sebastopol; and if a gallant allied force had come up at the close of the day, to render the balance somewhat more equal, the result would have been the same on both occasions. The Polish squadrons threw themselves on the Muscovite artillery with the same intrepidity as the English light horse, in after days, on the shores of the Crimea; and, like them, after passing through the guns, charged and routed the enemy's cavalry, three times more numerous than their own, in rear. Dwernicki's leading was the prototype of that of Lord Cardigan. These facts lead to a conclusion of great and lasting importance for the interests of civilisation and freedom in future times. This is, that the forces of Europe, animated by the spirit of liberty and the energy of intelligence, are still as superior to the hosts of Asia as they were in the days of Marathon and Platæa; and that the ceaseless encroachments and menacing strength of Russia is not owing to any advantage which the Asiatics possess in courage over the Europeans, but to the greater foresight of its government, and unity of purpose in its inhabitants,—qualities in which the people of the West, unfortunately, are often as deficient as they are superior in vigour and knowledge.

54. Parallel of Grochow and Sieroczyn with Inkermann and Balaklava.

This brilliant success elevated the Poles as much as it depressed the Russians, and it would have been attended with the most important consequences had the government of Warsaw possessed any reserve force to support it. But as Radziwil's army had been obliged to seek shelter behind the cannon of Praga, it was justly deemed too hazardous to allow Dwernicki, with his little band of heroes, to maintain an isolated contest with the immense forces of the Muscovites on the right bank of the Vistula. Add to this, the Polish government were alarmed by the

55. Operations of Dwernicki on the left bank of the Vistula.

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progress of General Kreutz with four regiments of cavalry, who had crossed the river, and threatened to cut off the communication between Warsaw and Cracow. Dwernicki, accordingly, received orders immediately to recross
Feb. 17. the Vistula, which he did on the 17th at Goru. Two days after, he met the advanced guard of Kreutz, which
Feb. 19. he defeated, and took four pieces of cannon; but having pursued their advantage too far, the Poles fell under the cross fire of some Russian guns, and were driven back with heavy loss. After this, Dwernicki took post opposite Karczew, and hindered the Russians from crossing the Vistula; and soon after turned against his old antagonist,
Feb. 26. Kreutz, whom he forced to recross the river, with the loss of two entire squadrons, which were made prisoners in the town of Pulawy. Such was the exaltation of the Polish cavalry, and depression of the Russians at these repeated
March 3. defeats, that Dwernicki, on the 3d March, again crossed the Vistula on the ice, and attacked the Russians in position on the road leading to Kurow, totally defeated them, drove them headlong through that town, taking four guns and three hundred men prisoners. Dwernicki, upon this, got the surname of the "Furnisher of Cannon" in the Polish army; and such was the terror which his hussars inspired in the enemy, that whole squadrons took to flight at the sight of a few Polish uniforms. Kreutz retreated with the utmost expedition, recrossed the Wieprz, and never rested till he got across the Bug; while Dwernicki, to whom the route of Zamosc was thus opened,
March 9. reached that fortress, which he entered in triumph, and gave some rest to his heroic followers. His ranks were there rapidly recruited by volunteers, who flocked from all quarters to join his victorious standard; but they did little more than compensate the losses by the cholera, the fatal bequest of the retreating Russians, which in a few weeks carried off five hundred men.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 300, 309; Ann. Hist. xiv. 491.

Although the Poles might well congratulate themselves upon these glorious actions, and derive confidence from

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the stand they had made in the commencement of the war against the gigantic forces of their opponents, yet alarm not the less prevailed in the capital, and the public voice loudly demanded a change in the direction of the armies. Though their courage had attracted the admiration of all Europe, and rendered abortive the first efforts of the enemy, yet they could not disguise from themselves that their situation was beset with dangers, and that a single false step on the part of their general might land them in destruction. Their forces had been driven back into Warsaw; the fire of Praga had alone repelled the enemy from the capital, and rumour, with its hundred tongues, had already spread abroad through Europe the report that it was taken, and all was lost. Radziwil's military talents had not proved equal to the emergency: during the battles of Grochow and Praga he had given scarce any orders, and the troops had obeyed the commands of Chlopicki and Skrzynecki, whose coolness and military talents, in spite of themselves, forced them to the lead. The former, desperately wounded, lay stretched on the bed of suffering. The command of the armies was accordingly taken from Radziwil, and unanimously bestowed by the Diet on Skrzynecki, whose exploits and military talents ere long fully justified the choice.[1]

56. Skrzynecki appointed generalissimo by the Diet.

[1] Rom. Solt. i. 305, 309, ii. 1, 7; Ann. Hist. xiv. 492, 493.

Born in Gallicia of parents in affluent circumstances, SKRZYNECKI received a liberal education, and he was introduced into the world under the auspices of the Czartoryski family. In 1809, when the war broke out between the French and Austrians, and Gallicia was invaded by the Russian forces, he entered a regiment levied by Prince Constantine Czartoryski, and acquired, during the short campaign which followed, the reputation of a good infantry officer. Afterwards, when the kingdom of Poland was re-established, he was promoted to the footguards of the Grand-duke Constantine, but having, like many others, fallen under the displeasure of that capricious

57. His biography and character.

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tyrant, he was transferred to a regiment of the line; and being a sort of martyr, he immediately became popular with the army. After this he was for a time tinged with the mystical ideas on religion which, spreading from the Congregation in France, were, during the Restoration, so widely diffused over the higher classes in Europe. But this did not cause him to abandon his patriotic feelings; and during the trials in 1826 of the persons connected with the secret societies in Poland, he contributed not a little, by his energy and intelligence, to the acquittal of several of the accused. When the revolution broke out at Warsaw on the 29th November, he was in command of a regiment there, and was one of the first who joined the popular side. Though far from sanguine as to the issue of the contest, and by no means led away by the illusions which generally prevailed among the liberal enthusiasts on that subject, he actively contributed his part to the liberation of the country; and his military capacity and courage in danger at the battles of Grochow and Praga were such as clearly pointed him out for the situation of commander-in-chief, when the wound of Chlopicki disqualified him for further service in the field. He was at this time forty-five years of age; his figure was tall, and countenance handsome, and his address and talent in conversation had already obtained for him much envied success in society. His ambition, like that of most eminent men, was great; but it was set on lofty things, and concealed from all but his most intimate friends under the charm of a polished and captivating manner.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. ii. 15, 17; Biog. Univ. lxxxii. 234, 236, sup.

58. Ineffectual attempts at a negotiation, and vigorous preparations of Skrzynecki.

The first care of Skrzynecki, on being elevated to the supreme command, was to endeavour to open a negotiation with Marshal Diebitch for the restoration of peace. It was soon found, however, that this attempt was hopeless, as every similar one is with Russia when not preceded by defeat. The Russian commander had no power to treat, except on the terms of an unconditional surrender,

and to those conditions the Poles could not for a moment be brought to listen. Both parties, therefore, made preparations for a renewal of the struggle; and the roads having become impassable in the two last weeks of March by the sudden thaw, both had a short leisure to complete these preparations. Diebitch spread his army out in extended cantonments, reaching over a breadth of eighty English miles, for the sake of provisions and lodgings for his numerous followers; and Skrzynecki made the utmost efforts to raise the spirits and increase the number and efficiency of his troops. The recruits were clothed, armed, and disciplined with the utmost diligence; the new intrenchments round Warsaw were pushed forward with the utmost rapidity—the whole inhabitants, male and female, labouring night and day in the trenches; and the greatest efforts were made to provide the necessary supplies of ammunition for the troops. By these means, the chasms in the ranks occasioned by the battles of Grochow and Praga were rapidly filled up by ardent recruits; and the general-in-chief raised the enthusiasm to the highest by a noble proclamation, in which he called upon them to conquer or die in defence of their country.[1] *

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 493; Rom. Solt. ii. 21.

Skrzynecki's plan of operations, which bore the signet-mark of genius, was to take advantage of his central position, protected by the fortifications of Warsaw, and

* "Soldats! nous avons devant nous un ennemi fier de son bonheur, de ses forces, et du rang qu'il tient en Europe. Mais, s'il est formidable par sa puissance, les outrages dont il nous a accablés ont comblé la mesure, et le rend coupable aux yeux de Dieu et des hommes. Pleins de confiance désormais dans la sainteté de notre cause, et dans la Divine Providence, nous pouvons sans crainte nous mesurer avec lui. Jurons en notre âme et conscience qué nous resterons fidèles à cette devise, '*Vaincre ou mourir pour la patrie!*' et nous servirons d'exemple dans l'histoire du monde aux défenseurs des droits sacrés et inviolables des nations. Si la victoire ne doit pas couronner nos efforts, du moins nous ne vivrons pas pour nous soumettre à son joug odieux. C'est à cette gloire que je vous convie, et je vous assure la couronne du martyr, si ce ne sont des couronnes de lauriers, au bout de cette carrière héroïque et semée de dangers. Nous les gagnerons certainement, si vous me secondez par votre valeur et votre soumission. SKRZYNECKI."—ROM. SOLT. vol. ii. p. 24.

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59. Skrzynecki's plan of operations.

fall with his concentrated forces upon Diebitch's men while still dispersed in their cantonments, and inflict upon them, by a sudden irruption when unprepared, as great a loss as possible. The weight of the attack was to be directed towards Ostrolenka, in order to force back the Russian right wing, and reopen the communications with Lithuania, into which it was proposed to throw a division, which was to advance towards Wilna, and lend its aid to the malcontents in that province, with whom a correspondence had already been entered into. At the same time, taking advantage of the consternation produced by the sudden attack in the centre, Dwernicki with his little band of heroes was to move rapidly into Volhynia, and rouse the insurrection in that province and Podolia, where a large body of insurgents, for the most part cavalry, awaited only their approach to join the national cause. Everything here depended upon the success of the first attack on the Russian centre by Skrzynecki in person; but the straggling positions of the Muscovites, and the vigour and secresy of the Polish general, joined to the advantages of his central position, gave the prospect of decisive success in that quarter.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. ii. 37, 41; Ann. Hist. xiv. 493.

60. Forces at his disposal.

The forces with which the Polish general had to undertake these various operations, though not considerable, were yet nearly adequate to their accomplishment. The troops at his disposal amounted to 55,000 men, of whom 16,000 were cavalry, with 125 guns. The first division, 9540 strong, with 18 guns; the third, under Malachowski, 11,096 bayonets, with 20 pieces of cannon; and the fourth, of 7665 combatants, were under the immediate command of Skrzynecki, with Uminski's cavalry, 5700 sabres. The second division, of 8288 men, with 18 guns, under General Gielgud, was to force its way athwart the Russian right into Lithuania, while the cavalry of Lubienski and Skarzynski, mustering 7000 sabres, were, under Dwernicki, to diverge into Volhynia. If the insurrection in these provinces could acquire consistency before the Mus-

covite legions were upon them, the Poles had every chance of success; but the risk was very great that they would be cut to pieces before they were either disciplined or equipped as real soldiers. Everything depended, in the first instance, on the vigour and secresy of Skrzynecki's blows in the centre, which were to be struck with not more than 25,000 combatants against not less than 70,000; and this great inequality could be overcome only by the skilful use of a central position, and superior rapidity of concentration.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. ii. 32, 33; Ann. Hist. xiv. 493, 494.

61. Skrzynecki's brilliant success in the centre. March 31.

Skrzynecki's measures were taken with equal ability and secresy. At midnight, on the 30th March, he set out from Warsaw at the head of the divisions Rybinski, Malachowski, and Gielgud, and in the utmost silence crossed the bridge of the Vistula, which, with the roads for a little distance beyond it, had been laid with straw. With such skill was the movement conducted, that the Russians were in total ignorance of what was going forward, and the Polish advanced guard, favoured by a thick fog, was upon them before they were aware that it had crossed the Vistula. The surprise was complete, the success beyond all hopes great. Geismar's corps, which was the first to be reached, was suddenly assailed, when the men were for the most part asleep, and almost entirely destroyed. The few that escaped endeavoured to rally on the corps of Rosen, which was in battle array at Dembewielkie, sixteen miles from Warsaw. The position of the Russians was strong, the left being covered by the marshy banks of a stream which flows into the Vistula, their centre protected by thick brushwood, and their right by a wood. The approach to the position was rendered extremely difficult by the spongy nature of the ground, which was all but impassable for artillery.[2]

[2] Ann. Hist. xiv. 494, 495; Rom. Solt. ii. 40, 45.

62. Total defeat of the Russians. March 31.

Vain, however, were all these advantages of position against the heroic valour of the Poles. Part of Malachowski's division advanced on the right of the *chaussée*, supported by Skarzynski's horse; while Gielgud's divi-

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sion, and the remainder of Malachowski's, operated on the left. The Russians at first made a stout resistance; the fire, especially of artillery, was soon extremely warm along the whole line; and the contest was prolonged the more that the extreme wetness of the ground almost everywhere prevented the Polish cavalry from charging. The battle continued, with various success, and great loss on both sides, till the evening; but at seven o'clock a brigade of Skarzynski's horse, by a vigorous charge, carried the village of Dembe, broke the enemy's centre, and took nine pieces of cannon. Upon this the whole of Rosen's corps took to flight, and nothing but the darkness of the night, and the extreme exhaustion of the Polish troops, who had marched and fought since the preceding midnight, saved any part of them from destruction. As it was, the Poles took six thousand prisoners, besides inflicting an equal loss in killed and wounded on the enemy, who dispersed in all directions, no longer preserving even the appearance of an army. Such of them as could be reached by the Polish horse surrendered without resistance; the peasants brought in great numbers who were straggling in the woods; and so great was the consternation of the Muscovites, that next morning the extraordinary spectacle was exhibited of two peasants, without arms, bringing to the Polish headquarters twelve Russian soldiers, whom they allowed to carry their muskets, to avoid the trouble of taking them from them![1]

[1] Rom. Solt. ii. 45, 46; Ann. Hist. xiv. 494.

63. Great success of the Poles in the pursuit. April 1.

The extreme fatigue of the troops prevented Skrzynecki from continuing the pursuit far on the 31st; but at daybreak on the 1st April it was resumed by Lubienski, with his brigade of cavalry, who, having now got on the highway, pushed on with the utmost vigour, and rendered it totally impossible for the Russians to rally at any point. At the head of his lancers he passed in full trot through the towns of Minsk and Kaluckzyn, amidst the loud cheers of the inhabitants, and, without ever drawing bridle, pushed on above twenty miles, collecting prisoners

at every step. So great was the consternation of the Russians, that whole battalions threw down their arms, and surrendered at the sight of the Polish advanced squadron. Before he halted for the night he had made six thousand additional prisoners, which was the more important as the greater part of them were Lithuanians, and four thousand of them entered the Polish ranks. Altogether the Poles in these two days made twelve thousand prisoners, besides six thousand of the enemy killed or wounded, and twelve guns taken,—a victory about as great as that which, thirty years before, had broken the strength of Austria in the forest of Hohenlinden.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. ii. 46, 47; Ann. Hist. xiv. 494.

64. Chances which now awaited Skrzynecki.

After this terrible disaster, Rosen retired with the few remains of his troops to Siedlece, and Skrzynecki advanced his headquarters to Kaluckzyn, where he was joined two days after by General Milberg with seven thousand men, which much more than repaired the losses of the preceding actions. A great career now awaited the Polish general, and he was strongly urged by his generals to adopt it. This was, to draw together all his disposable troops, which would have amounted to full forty thousand men, and attack the enemy in Lublin; and, after taking it, advance and assail the rear of the corps commanded by Diebitch in person, which, shut in between the Wieprz, the Vistula, and the Polish army, would have been in the most perilous situation. A council of war was held on the subject. "I have completely beaten," said Skrzynecki, "a part of the Russian army; I have got the command of the centre of operations, and it is in my power either to push forward my left, pass the Bug at Nur, and attack the Russian guard which is opposed to it; or turn to my right, and take Diebitch in flank, who has not had time to collect the troops cantoned between the Vistula and the Wieprz. But the roads are impracticable for artillery; my information on that subject is positive; I am chained to the great road of Siedlece; I cannot profit by my victory."[2]

[2] Rom. Solt. ii. 39, 40.

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65. Opinion of Prondzynski and others, which is not adopted.

The other generals did not estimate so strongly the difficulties of an immediate advance either to the right or left. "We cannot," said Prondzynski, "it is true, carry with us our guns, but the Russians are in the same situation; they have the same difficulties to contend with that we have. If we cannot drag forward our cannon, they cannot take theirs away, or bring them up to the front; our relative position is unchanged: let us then instantly advance; let us take advantage of the consternation into which the enemy has been thrown. We shall meet them with the ascendant of victory, and fortune will crown our efforts." Had Skrzynecki been supported by the resources of the French Republic, or even had the despotic authority which Napoleon wielded in Italy, he would probably have followed this bold advice, and possibly success as decisive might have attended his efforts as had done those of that great commander in Lombardy in 1796. But he had no reserves behind him; his army was the last hope of Poland; a single reverse might at once prove fatal; and Skrzynecki with reason feared that, if he pushed further forward on the great road without having his flank secured, Diebitch would collect his troops and cut off his communication with Warsaw by occupying Minsk or Dembe in his rear. Roman Soltyk strongly urged an immediate advance to Siedlece, where the Russian grand park of artillery was placed, and which would fall an easy prey, as it was not defended by more than ten thousand men; adding that this would be sure to draw on Diebitch, and expose him to a flank attack while striving to cut off the Polish communications. But this step was deemed by Skrzynecki too hazardous, and without moving further forward, or advancing to Siedlece, he remained inactive on the great road, though Uminski with his division of cavalry joined him in the night between the 3d and 4th.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. ii. 49, 51.

At length having drawn together every disposable

sabre and bayonet, and adequately secured his rear, Skrzynecki determined on a forward movement, and for this purpose advanced with twenty-five thousand of his best troops against Rosen, who was in position with an equal force on the Kostrzyn, covering the approach to Siedlece. The Polish plan of attack, which was very ably combined, was as follows: Prondzynski was to march by Jerusalem and Wodyrice with nine thousand men, so as to turn Rosen's left, while Skrzynecki himself with eleven thousand assailed him by the high-road in front, and Chrzanowski was to advance with five thousand men to Stoczek, so as to threaten Diebitch in person, and lead him to suppose the attack was to be directed against him, so as to prevent him from sending succours to his menaced lieutenant. If these attacks succeeded, Rosen would be thrown back on the Livrie, a river flowing through marshy beds, and overwhelmed at the crossing of the bridge of Iganie. Had these plans been carried out as proposed, beyond all doubt Rosen's corps would have been totally destroyed. But by one of those chances so common in war, he had withdrawn the bulk of his forces from their position on the Kostrzyn before the attack was made, and half of them had defiled in retreat over the bridge of Iganie before Prondzynski was upon them. That general, too, had only six thousand men in hand when he commenced the attack on fifteen thousand, and Skrzynecki was not yet come up. Thus his position was critical, but such was the valour of the Poles that they overcame all opposition. Putting themselves at the head of their troops, the Polish chiefs advanced courageously against the enemy, of nearly double their strength, with twenty-four guns placed in battery. So disheartened were the Russians by their previous defeats that they made very little resistance, but fled tumultuously to the bridge, abandoning half of their guns and fifteen hundred prisoners to the victorious Poles.

66. Victory of the Poles at Iganie. April 10.

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This success was the more remarkable that the troops thus defeated were the élite of Pahlen's veterans; and the old soldiers, in shame after their defeat, and indignant at their officers, who gave the first example of flight, tore their eagles from their shakos and trampled them under their feet.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. ii. 54, 59; Ann. Hist. xiv. 494.

67. Cholera breaks out in the Polish army, which is arrested in its advance.

Siedlece was now open, and must, with the park of artillery placed in it, have fallen into Skrzynecki's hands had he immediately advanced against it; but he was prevented from doing so by the dread of bringing the cholera into his army, which was raging in the Russian hospitals at that place. Vain precaution! The Poles took the contagion from the Muscovite prisoners taken at the bridge of Iganie, and it soon made as great ravages in their ranks as in those of their opponents. This misfortune for some days arrested Skrzynecki's advance, and the Russians, seeing they were not pursued, remeasured their steps, and advanced a body of twelve thousand men against Uminski, who had only six thousand. Notwithstanding the most heroic efforts on the part of the Poles, they were overwhelmed by numbers, and driven back with the loss of five hundred men, though not before they had inflicted a loss of double that amount upon the enemy. This check, however, terminated Skrzynecki's offensive operations in the centre at this time; and Diebitch, who had shown great indecision in the crisis, and was far from having sustained the reputation of the "Passer of the Balkan," was too happy to let him rest for a short time while he himself reorganised his shattered columns.[2]

April 14.

[2] Rom. Solt. ii. 60, 66.

68. Bad success of Sierawiki on the right. April 17.

During these brilliant operations in the centre, the right wing of the Poles, under Sierawiki and Pac, fifteen thousand strong, was ordered to cross the Vistula, and advance against General Kreutz, who was at Lublin, with twelve thousand, observing Dwernecki, who was at Zamosc, ready to throw himself into Volhynia, and stir up an insurrection in that province. The Polish

generals, in two divisions, nine thousand being under Sierawiki, and six thousand under Pac, crossed the Vistula, and advanced cautiously against Kreutz, of the amount of whose forces they were ignorant. Unfortunately, Sierawiki, when alone, and with his cavalry in part detached, came upon Kreutz, who lay at Belzyec, in a strong position at the entrance of a forest, with twenty-four guns. The forces on the opposite sides were too unequal to admit of success; but as his orders from Skrzynecki were positive to attack the enemy, the brave Polish general did not hesitate to engage. He had only six thousand men, entirely new levies, and six guns, all of light calibre; but nevertheless they made so vigorous a fight, that, though the Russians repulsed them, they were unable to follow up their advantage, or make any prisoners. Next day he retired to Kazimoiz, on the banks of the Vistula, and there was attacked by the Russians. Notwithstanding the immense disparity of force, the Poles made a gallant resistance, but at length were driven across the river with the loss of fifteen hundred men in killed and wounded.[1]

April 18.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 495; Rom. Solt. ii. 79, 83.

69. Defeat of Dwernicki in Volhynia, who is obliged to take refuge in Gallicia.

This misfortune drew after it another still more considerable. Dwernicki, who was to have been supported by Sierawiki, advanced in the first week of April into Volhynia with his active and intrepid squadrons, and at first with signal success. He had only one thousand three hundred infantry, and two thousand seven hundred horse, with twelve pieces of light horse-artillery. With these inconsiderable forces he crossed the Bug at Krilow on the 10th April, and marched against the Russian general Rudiger, who had thirteen thousand troops under his orders, and was to be supported by Roth, with twelve thousand more. Dwernicki's reliance to combat forces so immense was on the insurrection which was ready to break out in Volhynia, and the aid they would derive from the admirable light horse of the steppes, and the skilful marksmen of the forests, of whom twelve thousand were

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expected to be in arms as soon as the Polish uniforms were seen amongst them. He defeated a Russian detachment which tried to oppose a passage, and addressed an animated proclamation to the Volhynians, in which, referring with just exultation to the victory of Dembe, he called on them "now or never" to combat for their ancient liberties.* Few, however, at first answered the appeal; they knew too well the forces of the Russians, who had been long quartered amongst them. Ignorant of the small number of his opponents, whom he estimated at twelve thousand men, Rudiger retired before the Poles, and several skirmishes ensued entirely to their advan-

March 19.

tage; but at length, having learned that they were only two thousand three hundred horse, he stood firm, and a general action ensued. Despite their inferior numbers, Dwernicki's hussars made several successful charges, and took eight pieces of cannon and eight hundred prisoners, and fairly drove the Russians, four times their number, from the field of battle. Next day he advanced towards Podolia, and on the 23d reached Kolodno; but there he was beset by Rudiger on one side, and Krasucki, with part of Roth's corps, on the other. Thus pressed by forces nine times his own, the brave Polish general had no alterna-

March 26.

tive but to cross the Austrian frontier, and enter Gallicia, where his men were immediately disarmed, and conducted into the interior. But so little zealous was the Austrian government at this time in favour of Russia, that they were negligently guarded, and almost all, though without arms, regained the standards of independence.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. ii. 109, 114; Ann. Hist. xiv. 495, 496.

Although it terminated in this manner in disaster, the intelligence of the irruption of Dwernicki and his early

* "Nous avons déjà avec l'aide de Dieu battu les ennemis sur votre propre territoire; le régiment de dragons Russes de Largopol a été presqu'entièrement détruit, et moitié de ses soldats sont nos prisonniers. Confiants dans la sainteté de notre cause, levez-vous simultanément: les Polonais et les Lithuaniens combattent en ce moment les Moscovites et remportent des victoires. Je vous apporte la nationalité et vos anciennes libertés.

"A PRÉSENT OU JAMAIS."

—ROMAN SOLTYK, ii. 105.

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successes roused a formidable insurrection in Podolia, the southern parts of Volhynia, and the Ukraine. The inhabitants of those immense plains, trusting, like the Scythians of old, in the fleetness of their horses, and the ease with which they could escape in the boundless solitude of the steppes, eagerly hoisted the standard of independence. The insurrection was commenced before it was ready in other quarters by the brothers Sobanski, who took the field at the head of 250 horse; and their followers soon swelled to 2000 cavalry and 500 excellent chasseurs under Kolysko. With this small band he advanced against the city of Kiow, containing 80,000 inhabitants, where he would have found ample supplies of all sorts, closely followed by 4000 men of Roth's division. The Polish rearguard faced about, and by a headlong charge routed the Russian horse; but, following up their advantage with the ardour of young troops, they came on the enemy's infantry and artillery, by whom they were repulsed with great slaughter, and forced to retreat. This disaster had a ruinous effect on the insurrection. Tracked by a host of enemies, displaying in many detached actions all the valour of their chivalrous ancestors, and defeated only by forces four times their numbers, their loss was great at every step, and at length, after performing prodigies of valour, this little band of heroes, now reduced to 700 men, was obliged to cross the Austrian frontier, and take refuge in Gallicia, where they were immediately disarmed.[1]

70. Insurrection in Podolia and the Ukraine, and its final discomfiture. April 25. May 17. May 26. [1] Rom. Solt. ii. 121, 126 Ann. Hist. xiv. 496, 497.

While those calamitous events were extinguishing the last hopes of national existence in the southern provinces, the two grand armies in the centre remained in a state of inaction. Diebitch was awaiting reinforcements to supply the immense chasms made in his ranks; and Skrzynecki, although his forces, including Pac's division, were about 57,000 men, did not deem it expedient to resume the offensive. Poland has since had abundant reason to regret that inaction, for so favourable an opportunity of

71. Operations in the centre.

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striking a decisive blow never again occurred, the two armies being of nearly equal strength, and the Poles exalted by victory, while the Russians were depressed by defeat. At length, yielding to the solicitations of the patriots in Lithuania, who were eagerly requesting a body of regular troops to enable them to commence their insurrection, he sent two detachments of troops, under Lowinski and Jankowski, to endeavour to penetrate into Russian Poland, but they were both met by superior bodies of Russians, and obliged to retreat. Nevertheless the insurrection, headed by some brave partisans, broke out in that province, and gave the Russians great uneasiness, as it lay directly on their line of operations. At length Diebitch, having been largely reinforced, resumed the offensive, and advanced with 40,000 men to Jerusalem, while 15,000 marched on Kaluckzyn. Skrzynecki, instead of attacking him, retreated on his approach, anticipating what soon happened, that want of supplies, and the wasted state of the country, would soon compel him to retreat. On the 28th the Russians were again in Minsk, but they remained there only a few days, and then retired to their old position behind Siedlece, while the Poles again resumed the ground on their front.[1]

April 26.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 496, 497; Rom. Solt. ii. 136, 142.

72. Expedition of Chrzanowski into Volhynia, and its defeat. May 3.

Having been informed of the first successes of Dwernicki in Volhynia, and not yet apprised of his ultimate disasters, Skrzynecki resolved to support him by a division of his best troops. With this view he detached Chrzanowski with six thousand three hundred men, with orders to march upon Lublin, attack Kreutz, and march by Zamosc into Volhynia. The Polish general, in the first instance, gained several advantages in detached combats, in one of which, near Lubartow, he made eight hundred prisoners. But Kreutz, having collected his forces, attacked him with greatly superior numbers on the day following, and after an obstinate conflict, in which the Poles displayed the most heroic valour, they were obliged to retire with considerable loss.[2] They made

May 9.

May 10.

[2] Rom. Solt. ii. 147, 151; Ann. Hist. xiv. 496.

good their passage, however, to Zamosc, which they reached on the 14th, from whence Chrzanowski made various excursions into Volhynia, which had no decisive result, as the defeat of Dwernicki had extinguished all the hopes of the insurgents in that quarter. May 14.

73. March of Skrzynecki against the Russian right.

While these operations were taking place on the right, Skrzynecki was engaged in a movement ably conceived, and which was likely to be attended with the most important results. His object was to force back the Russian right, the headquarters of which were at Ostrolenka, and thereby open the communication with Lithuania, where the insurrection was making considerable progress, and which he intended to support by an entire Polish division, eight thousand strong, under Gielgud. This project was not without its dangers, as it left Warsaw nearly uncovered; but the prospect of rousing the great strength of Lithuania for the national cause, and the paramount necessity of moving the seat of war out of the Polish territory, which was well-nigh exhausted, rendered it advisable to run the risk. In effect, though with severe loss to the Poles, it in the main succeeded. The Polish army, forty-six thousand strong, with one hundred guns, broke up on the 12th May from their position in front of Kostrzyn, and advanced against the Russian Guards, who were cantoned in and around OSTROLENKA, hoping to overwhelm them before the remainder of Diebitch's corps could come up to their relief. Uminski, with six thousand men, was left to make head against Diebitch, who, little suspecting what was going on on his right, advanced with twenty-four thousand men against him, expecting to encounter the bulk of Skrzynecki's army. Finding that the Guards were unconscious of his approach, Skrzynecki, after reaching Sicrosk, which he did on the 16th, formed his troops into three corps of attack, which was fixed for the following day. The Russians, however, though they embraced the élite of the Guards, did not venture to await the attack even in the intrench- May 12. May 16.

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ments they had raised around Ostrolenka, and retired towards Bialystok, closely followed by Skrzynecki, who on the 21st attacked and defeated their rear-guard with great slaughter at Tykoczyn, which fell into his hands. By this advance the Russian right was so far driven back that the road to Lithuania was thrown open, and Chlapowski, with a Polish division four thousand strong, was immediately pushed forward into that province.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 497, 498; Rom. Solt. ii. 167, 178.

74. Diebitch marches against the Polish rear.

So far great success had attended this bold and well-conceived movement of Skrzynecki, and in its main object—that of opening up a communication with, and throwing succours into Lithuania—it may be said it had answered every expectation. But the difficulty was for the Polish army to get back and regain its communications with Warsaw after having gained this advantage. Diebitch resolved to concentrate his forces and attack them, as he had done the Turks at Kouleftcha, when striving to regain their stronghold in Schumla two years before.[2] With this view, having drawn together all his disposable troops, amounting to sixty-five thousand men, he marched against Skrzynecki, who, after the detachments he had made, could not collect above forty thousand. Fearful of being assailed in rear by this superior force, the Polish general rapidly retired, crossed the Narew, and occupied Ostrolenka with part of his forces. But the advance of Diebitch had been so swift that it had in a manner cut the Polish army in two. The divisions of Gielgud and Lubienski were separated from the remainder of the army in Ostrolenka. Having, by a night-march between the 25th and 26th, come close up to the two last Polish divisions, who were by no means aware of his approach, he commenced a vigorous attack on Lubienski's division with forces four times his own.[3] Only two bridges were in the hands of the Poles to effect their retreat over the Narew, and if Diebitch's attack had been as vigorous as his night-march had been rapid, Lubienski's division would have been totally de-

[2] Ante, c. xv. § 126.

May 21.

[3] Rom. Solt. ii. 181, 187; Ann. Hist. xiv. 498, 499.

stroyed. But so completely had the Polish victories disconcerted the Russian commanders, that they attacked with so little vigour as gave Pac time to issue from Ostrolenka, recross the Narew, and advance to his support.

75. Battle of Ostrolenka. May 26.

This brought on a general battle. Lubienski, seeing his communications so seriously threatened, and that certain destruction awaited him if his retreat were turned into a rout, made the most vigorous efforts to keep his ground. He was long seconded by the steady valour of his troops, but at length they were overwhelmed by numbers and driven back in disorder to the bridges over the Narew, which the Russians passed *pêle-mêle* with the last of the fugitives. The bulk of Lubienski's men got safely over, and drew up in two lines in good order on the left bank of the river. The Russians, however, crossed rapidly over, and supported the passage by two powerful batteries, one of thirty-four and another of thirty-six guns, on the right bank of the stream, and which thundered with terrible effect on the Polish lines on the opposite side. The moment was to the last degree critical; for if the Russians succeeded in establishing themselves in Ostrolenka, the Polish army was cut in two, and Gielgud's division, which was still on the right bank, in all probability would be destroyed. The surprise was complete. Skrzynecki only reckoned on a warm affair of the rearguard when crossing the river, and now he had the bulk of the Russian army upon his hands.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. ii. 181, 190; Ann. Hist. xiv. 498, 499.

76. Repulse of the Poles.

Though taken unawares in this manner, the Polish general did all that skill and courage could effect to repair the check which had been sustained. Both parties brought up fresh forces every minute, and the field of battle, which was extremely narrow, was speedily crowded with combatants; the Poles straining every nerve to drive back the Russians to the left bank, the Russians to make good the footing they had got on the right. The Polish artillery consisted only of twelve pieces, which were quickly

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dismounted and silenced; while dense masses of Russians, soon wholly unopposed by artillery, crowded down to the water's edge. In despair, Langerman made a gallant charge with the bayonet, which checked the enemy, and two battalions laid down their arms; but the Poles were unable to collect the prisoners for want of cavalry, and they all escaped. Skrzynecki, who arrived on the field of battle at eleven o'clock, made the most incessant efforts to prevent the enemy from extending themselves on the right. Wherever danger was greatest he was to be seen, animating the troops by his voice and example; his clothes were pierced with balls, and nearly all his aides-de-camp were killed or wounded. The Polish artillery of Col. Bern, which was at last brought up, replied with effect to the enemy's batteries, and made deep chasms in his ranks. Towards evening the fire slackened on both sides, owing to want of ammunition and the fatigue of the combatants; and at nightfall the Russians withdrew all their forces to the left bank of the river, leaving only detachments to guard the *têtes-de-pont* on the right.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. ii. 189, 193; Ann. Hist. xiv. 498, 499.

77. Its results.

In this terrible battle, in which both parties displayed the most heroic valour, the Poles lost seven thousand men killed and wounded, including Generals Kicki and Kaminsky, who fell gloriously on the field. The Russian loss was not less than ten thousand men, owing to the dense masses in which they fought, and the unerring precision with which the Polish balls fell on their crowded ranks. Yet, although their loss was considerably greater than that of their opponents, and the Russians withdrew from the most obstinately contested part of the field, the battle was attended, to the Poles, with the consequences of the most serious defeat. Seven thousand men to them was a much greater loss than ten thousand to the Russians; and they found themselves entirely cut off from the division of General Gielgud, eight thousand strong, which was lost to the grand army, and abandoned to a doubtful fate in the forests of Lithuania. So strongly

did these circumstances present themselves to the minds of the generals, who assembled in a council of war next day, that, with the exception of Skrzynecki, who resolutely maintained they should keep their ground, they all counselled a retreat. The opinion of the majority prevailed, and the army retired leisurely by Pultusk to Praga, without being disquieted in their retreat. But they were permanently severed from the division of Giel- gud, who possibly might, by a prolonged stay at Ostro- lenka, have been enabled, by a circuitous march, to rejoin the army.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. ii. 192, 193; Ann. Hist. xiv. 499.

78. Death of Diebitch and the Grand-duke Constantine.

Diebitch did not long enjoy the gleam of success which closed his long and honourable career. He had been severely chagrined at the previous disasters which his troops had undergone, and which had excited great irritation in the breast of the Emperor, who had resolved on his dismissal. The knowledge of this preyed upon his mind, and he sought a momentary relief in the immoderate use of ardent spirits, to which he was unhappily at all times too much addicted. The consequence was, that he became predisposed to the cholera, which at that time was raging in both armies. He died of that pestilence suddenly at Pultusk on the 10th June, and this was followed a few weeks afterwards by the death of the Grand-duke Constantine, who expired at Witepsk, in the arms of his beloved wife, for whom he had sacrificed the throne of Russia. The sudden death, at the same time, of the two men who had borne the most prominent parts in the war in Poland, naturally led to a suspicion of poison or suicide; but there appears nothing to justify this surmise, and the termination of the lives of both is sufficiently accounted for by the pestilence which at that time prevailed with so much violence in Poland, and the disasters which, by their depressing influence, had so much predisposed both to receive it.[2]

June 10.
June 27.

[2] Biog. Univ. lxii. 487; Ann. Hist. xiv. 500.

After the battle of Ostrolenka, the two principal armies remained nearly a month in a state of inaction.

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79. Suspension of hostilities of the two armies, and appointment of Paskiewitch to the command.

Both parties had suffered too much to admit of hostilities being speedily resumed by either. Skrzynecki lay under cover of the cannon of Praga, recruiting his shattered ranks, and incorporating with them the new levies; while the Russian army, which, after Diebitch's death, was intrusted to the skilful hands of Paskiewitch, was engaged in reorganising its divisions, and receiving reinforcements from the interior. The retreat of the chief army to the neighbourhood of Warsaw, however, and the knowledge of the severance of Gielgud's division, and the suppression of the insurrection in Volhynia, spread a great gloom in the capital, which was the more felt that it immediately succeeded the joyous anticipations which had been indulged in on Skrzynecki's former victories. This was sensibly increased by the hostile attitude of Austria and Prussia, which was daily inclining more from professed neutrality to open adhesion to Russia, and the certainty that no effective support was to be expected from the distant cabinets of London and Paris. So strongly did these feelings prevail in Warsaw, that it soon became evident that a political crisis was at hand. With the sovereign multitude continued success is as essential to the continuance of power as with the sovereign despot: the disaster of Ostrolenka presaged the fall of Skrzynecki as much as the rout of Dembe did that of Diebitch. The clubs were soon reopened, and resounded with violent declamations; the cry of "Treason!" was heard in the streets; an effort was made in the Diet to deprive the dictator of the command; and although the constitutional party succeeded in maintaining him in power, yet his authority was violently shaken, and it was evident that the next misfortune would overturn it altogether.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. ii. 202, 204.

Such a disaster was not long of occurring, and it was felt the more sensibly that it occurred in the quarter where the most sanguine hopes had been entertained of decisive success. Chlapowski and Gielgud having been, by the retreat of the Russians from Ostrolenka, entirely

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cut off from the main army, had no alternative but to throw themselves into Lithuania, and endeavour to find support in the insurrection in that province. At first their advance was attended by surprising success. The two generals formed a junction at Minsk, and with their united forces, twelve thousand strong, with twenty-four guns, advanced into the heart of Lithuania, where a powerful and enthusiastic party only awaited their arrival to join the insurrection. The contest had begun there some time before: when Chlapowski had entered the country, some thousand insurgents had joined the Polish standard; but they were ill armed, destitute of cannon or magazines, and very imperfectly disciplined, and were repeatedly defeated by the Russians in detached bodies. Such, however, was the spirit of the country, that they continued the contest under every disadvantage, seeking shelter in the forests when defeated, and again rejoining their standards when the danger had passed away. No less than three hundred and forty young men from the university of Wilna had joined their ranks, and twelve hundred under Prince Oginski, and the conflict was still going on in the very centre of the country. Chlapowski, at the time of the battle of Ostrolenka, was at the head of seven thousand men, in which a heroine, Mademoiselle Plater, held a command; and the arrival of Gielgud's corps, which nearly doubled his forces, encouraged the Poles to make an advance on Wilna. They defeated General Sacken, who with four thousand men tried to stop their progress, with the loss of two thousand men, crossed the Niemen, and advanced with eleven thousand men to the neighbourhood of Wilna. This advance roused the whole country. Eleven thousand Lithuanians flocked to the Polish standards, but there was no time to organise or arm them before the contest was decided under the walls of the capital.[1]

Insurrection in Lithuania, and final defeat of Gielgud. May 26.

May 27.

[1] Rom. Solt. ii. 230, 254; Ann. Hist. xiv. 501.

The Russians, who were seriously alarmed at the progress of the insurrection in their own dominions,

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81.

Battle of Wilna, and defeat of the Poles. June 18.

had made the greatest efforts to strengthen themselves in Wilna. They had collected there twenty-one thousand men, eighteen thousand of whom occupied an intrenched camp under General Sacken in front of the town, while three thousand were kept in reserve within its walls to overawe the discontented, who, on the first reverse, were ready to break out into insurrection. The Polish generals had only fourteen thousand, of whom not more than one-half were old troops fit to engage in a regular combat, and, what was even worse, they had little confidence in Gielgud, who had the chief command. Dembinski, with four thousand more, was at a distance, and took no part in the conflict. Zalewski, who commanded the Polish right, defeated the Russian left opposed to him; but Gielgud was repulsed in the centre, and his guns dismounted by the superior fire of the Russian artillery, and in the end the Poles were obliged to retreat with the loss of a thousand men. This check, as is generally the case in wars of invasion and insurrection, proved fatal to the Polish cause in Lithuania. Zalewski, who remained last on the field of battle, was cut off from Gielgud, and driven to Merecz, where he passed the Niemen, and sought refuge in the forests of the palatinate of Augustow. Gielgud himself, whose forces were weakened at every step by the desertion of the Lithuanian levies, who despaired of the cause, retreated with the troops which still remained with him towards the Polish frontier, leaving Dembinski and Zalewski to their fate. He was vigorously pursued by Sacken, and nothing but disaster attended his retreat.

July 7. Repulsed in an assault on Szawle on the Niemen, the Polish division rapidly melted away, and at length, tracked by different corps of Russians, it was compelled

July 12. to take refuge in the Prussian territory, where the men were immediately disarmed. Such was the indignation of the Polish officers at this catastrophe, that one of them, named Skalski, dashed out of the ranks mounted on

a fiery steed, and, galloping up to Gielgud, discharged a pistol at his breast. The unfortunate general instantly fell, and died a few minutes after, protesting with his last breath his fidelity to his country. The event proved that he had been the victim of unmerited vengeance; for Roland's corps, to which the assassin belonged, was a few days after obliged to follow his example, and take refuge in the Prussian territory, where it also was disarmed. More fortunate than either, Dembinski held to the south, and conducted his retreat with such skill, that, passing between all the divisions of the Russian grand army, stationed to intercept him, he made his entry into Warsaw on the 3d August, amidst the enthusiastic cheers of the inhabitants. Sixty thousand persons went out to meet him; the crowd pressed round his horse, embraced and kissed his feet, imploring on him the blessing of Heaven. They might well be proud of their hero. He had marched five hundred and fifty miles in twenty-five days, crossed ten rivers, and brought his corps intact through a host of enemies to Warsaw. The annals of war do not record a more memorable exploit.[1]

July 16.

Aug. 3.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 501, 502; Rom. Solt. ii. 237, 269.

82. Desperate state of the Poles, and plan of Paskiewitch.

The disastrous issue of these attempts to spread the insurrection in Volhynia and Lithuania, and the irreparable loss of nearly twenty thousand men to the grand army with which they were attended, were fatal to all the hopes of Polish independence. Nothing remained to its supporters but, like Cæsar, to meet their fate with resolution, and fall with honour. Yet such was the valour and constancy of the Poles, that they continued for above a month longer, with heroic courage, a contest which all the world saw had now become hopeless. Paskiewitch, who was a man of true military genius, as his brilliant campaigns in Asia Minor demonstrated, resolved to adopt an entirely different plan of operations from that which had proved so unfortunate under the direction of his predecessor. Instead of advancing, as Diebitch had done, on the direct road by Ostrolenka and Pultusk to

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the capital, where he would have the Polish army, backed by the formidable fortifications of Praga, to encounter, and a country utterly wasted to rely on for supplies, he resolved to cross the Vistula, and carry the war into the hitherto untouched country on the left bank, between that river and the Polish frontier. In doing so, it is true, he entirely abandoned his base of operations, and lost all his communications with Lithuania and Russia. But diplomacy had secured for him a new base, even superior in utility and convenience to that which was relinquished. Prussia, which had so often played a submissive and discreditable part on various crises of European history, had now become the entire vassal of Russia. Despite the remonstrances of England and France, which were vigorously exerted to retain the cabinet of Berlin in the path of real neutrality, the Prussian government openly, and in the most efficient manner, espoused the cause of Russia. Vessels laden with provisions, stores, and munitions of war, landed their cargoes at Dantzic, from whence they were forwarded forthwith to the Russian headquarters; and the frontier was everywhere crossed by convoys of every sort from the Prussian territory. Time will show whether, in so doing, that country has not put the seal to her own ultimate subjugation.[1]

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 502, 503; Rom. Solt. ii. 264, 286, 290.

83. Paskiewitch's plans and forces, and preparations of the Poles.

Secure of the inestimable advantage of this base of operations on the left bank of the Vistula, Paskiewitch assembled the bulk of his forces, sixty thousand strong, with three hundred pieces of cannon, at Pultusk, in the end of June, while Golowin and Rudiger, with twenty-three thousand men, were in reserve behind the Bug and the Wieprz. Skrzynecki in vain endeavoured to bring the Prussian government back to a system of neutrality. The efforts of Count Flahault, who supported him on the part of the French government, were equally ineffectual. The answer of the cabinet of Berlin was, that it had never professed to be *neutral*, but only *inactive*. Finding themselves assailed by such immense forces, to which

Skrzynecki had not twenty-five thousand to oppose, the Polish government ordered the *pospolite ruzsenie*, or *levée-en-masse;* and the whole inhabitants worked night and day with incredible diligence at the fortifications. An energetic proclamation was published by the Government, which began with these words: "In the name of God; in the name of the liberty of the nation, now placed between life and death; in the name of its kings and heroes, who have combated in former days for its religion and independence; in the name of justice and of the deliverance of Europe, we call on all classes to come forward to defend their country." All nobly met the appeal. The nobles and senators who were absent all flocked to Warsaw to share the danger, and, if necessary, die on their curule chairs; the most energetic measures which the public defence required were adopted by the Government; and the interest excited in the adjoining states was so warm that no less than two-and-twenty counties in Hungary presented petitions to the Emperor of Austria, praying him to intervene by force of arms for the support of Poland.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. ii. 200, 202; Ann. Hist. xiv. 503, 504.

84. Paskiewitch crosses the Vistula. July 19.

Paskiewitch broke up from Pultusk on the 4th July, directing his steps, not to Warsaw, but to Plock on the Lowes. He made a circuit round Modlin, where Skrzynecki had established himself with twenty-one thousand men, which, with the garrison of that fortress, brought his forces up to thirty thousand combatants. The Polish troops, however, were much depressed by their numerous defeats, and far from exhibiting the spirit or discipline they had shown at Grochow and Dembe. The general, in consequence, did not venture to measure himself in the open field with an enemy more than double his strength, led by a consummate leader. He remained, wisely, under the cannon of Modlin; and meanwhile the Russian general advanced by Plock to Osick on the Vistula, where the materials of three bridges had been prepared by the Prussian government. The bridges were quickly thrown

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across, and the army passed over. The Polish army upon this quitted Modlin and marched rapidly to Warsaw, while Paskiewitch drew the corps of Rudiger from Volhynia, which crossed the Vistula above Warsaw, and advanced down the left bank, in order to enter into communication with the main army, and join in the assault of the capital.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. ii. 291, 306; Ann. Hist. xiv. 504, 505.

85. Fall of Skrzynecki, who is succeeded by Dembinski.

The approach of these vast armies, numbering between them seventy thousand combatants, to whom the Poles could not at the utmost oppose more than thirty thousand, excited the utmost sensation at Warsaw, and roused to the very highest degree both the patriotic spirit and the savage passions of the people. Several councils were appointed by the Government to inquire into the conduct of the military operations, and the causes of the disasters which had recently been experienced. At length a commission was issued with full powers, extending even to his dismissal; and Skrzynecki, finding the current in the capital too strong to be resisted, resigned the command, and was succeeded by Dembinski, who had the courage,

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in circumstances evidently desperate, to undertake a command for which the crown of martyrdom could be the only recompense. Krukowieckski was soon after appointed President of the Council of Government. Skrzynecki bore his fall with the equanimity which is the characteristic of a noble mind, protesting his readiness still to serve his country, were it only in the capacity of a private soldier. On the day following his dismissal, there was a review held of the whole troops around Warsaw, at which, to indicate the purity of his feelings, the displaced general rode beside his successor. At the sight of their beloved

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chief, abandoned and in misfortune, the troops could not contain their feelings. Tears were seen running down many cheeks which would never have been shed for any sufferings of their own;[2] but they were turned into cheers of enthusiasm when Skrzynecki conjured them to exhibit the same submission to their new general which they had

[2] Rom. Solt. ii. 337, 342; Ann. Hist. xiv. 505.

done to him, and Dembinski promised to follow in his footsteps.

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History may well take a pride in recording this moving scene, in which noble parts were played by great actors on the tragic theatre of the world; but it would be well for the annals of Poland if the narrative of the change of government at Warsaw could stop there. Unfortunately, a very different scene was exhibited by the mobs in the capital. Excited by the approach of the Russians and the declamations in the clubs, as the Jacobins of Paris had been by the advance of the Duke of Brunswick in 1792, they broke out into similar excesses. The massacre in the prisons of Warsaw on the 15th and 16th of August 1831, is a fit companion to that in the prison of Paris on the 2d and 3d September 1792. A furious mob, excited by the declamations of the violent orators in the clubs, and exclaiming "Treason! treason!" collected in the streets; and the whole armed force having been sent into the intrenched camp, the Government had no means either of subduing it or defending themselves. They first invaded the palace, where they overturned the Government, and then proceeding to the state prisons, they broke in and murdered all the state prisoners, including Jankowski and Bukowski, who had been tried to please the clubs, for their want of success in Volhynia, but acquitted. Forty-seven persons, including several Russian prisoners, and several unconnected with politics, and confined for debt, fell victims to the fury of the populace on this calamitous occasion. Next day the Government, utterly powerless either to avert calamity or punish crime, gave in their resignation. They were succeeded by a new set of rulers, composed of the most violent of the clubs, at the head of which was Krukowieckski, whose talents were considerable, and energy of character well known.[1]

86. Massacres in Warsaw. Aug. 15 and 16.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 506; Rom. Solt. ii. 340, 344.

But the hour was now approaching, and Warsaw, to avert it, stood in need of very different defenders

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from the assassins of disarmed captives in the prisons. Aware that it could not much longer be averted, both parties made the most vigorous efforts to collect all their forces for the decision of the final struggle. The Polish army, in the first instance, had taken post on the Bzura, considerably in advance of the capital, and some struggles had taken place there; but Dembinski, not feeling himself in sufficient strength to maintain his ground so far from his intrenchments, fell back to the intrenched camp, upon which the inhabitants of the capital had long been labouring; and Skrzynecki again gave a noble proof of his disinterested patriotism, by taking the command which was offered him of one of the columns. On the 18th August the whole Polish army was collected at Warsaw, and, considering the losses it had undergone, it presented an astonishing force. It consisted of 57,500 men in the intrenched camp at Warsaw, with 136 guns harnessed, besides 20,000 more with 10 guns in garrison at Modlin and Zamosc, or in partisan corps still at large in the country on the right bank of the Vistula. Paskiewitch's forces were considerably longer of being concentrated, from the more extended circumference from which they were to be drawn. By the end of August, however, they had all come up, and amounted to 89,000 men, including Rudiger's corps, which had arrived, and 12,000 in observation before Praga, and they had no less than 386 pieces of cannon.[1]

87. Preparations and forces on both sides for the final struggle.

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[1] Rom. Solt. ii. 388, 393; Ann. Hist. xiv. 506, 507.

88. Victory of Ramorino over Rosen and Golowin.

Paskiewitch gave the Government of Warsaw till the 5th September to surrender at discretion, insisting on this as the only admissible terms. The Polish government in this crisis, instead of despairing, had the courage to send 20,400 men under Ramorino to the right bank of the Vistula, into the palatinate of Podlachia; while Lubienski, with 2800 horse, was despatched into that of Plock, to threaten the Russian communications. The remainder of the Polish forces, consisting of 34,000 more, guarded the intrenched camp at Warsaw, with 216 pieces of cannon. The in-

trenchments consisted of two lines, the first of which was mounted with 47 pieces of position, the second with 78; while the remainder, consisting of 84 field-pieces harnessed, were ready to carry assistance to any point which might require it. Ramorino, whose forces were greatly superior to those of Golowin which were opposed to him, gained considerable success. He defeated the united forces of Rosen and Golowin, with the loss of 1000 killed and wounded, besides 1500 prisoners, and drove them back in confusion to Biala. But this success, great as it was, and important as it might have been at an earlier period, was attended with no material results. The contest was to be decided under the walls of Warsaw, and bitterly was the want of Ramorino's 20,000 veterans felt in the decisive conflict which then ensued.[1]

[1] Rom. Solt. ii. 396, 402; Ann. Hist. xiv. 506, 507.

89. Assault of Warsaw. Sept. 6.

The assault of the intrenched camp commenced on the 6th September at daybreak, and continued the whole day with the utmost fury on both sides. It was hard to say whether the attack or defence was conducted with the greater vigour or determination. The ancient and inextinguishable animosity of the Muscovites and Poles burned with the greatest intensity in both armies, blended with the sublime feelings of freedom and independence on the one side, and the indignation at supposed treachery on the other. The Russians, who were 70,000 strong, with 388 guns, made their chief attack on the village of Wola in the first line, which was garrisoned only by three battalions and ten guns, and in the end brought up no less than 100 pieces of cannon to concentrate their fire upon it. So vigorous was the cannonade that the village, with the redoubts constructed around it, were carried at ten o'clock, and the Russians immediately occupied it in strength, and armed it with several additional batteries of their own, of heavier calibre than any the Poles could oppose to it. Malachowski, who commanded the Polish troops, made several desperate attempts to regain this important point, but all in vain. Wola was occupied by

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four strong battalions, which were fed by sixteen more placed in its rear; and the efforts of the Poles to retake it only led to a terrific slaughter, which ended in their troops being forced in that quarter back into the second line. There the troops made the most obstinate resistance; the officers encouraged the men by standing erect on the parapet amidst the hottest of the fire; and among the most courageous who then distinguished themselves were more than one heroine arrayed in the dress and inspired by the courage of the other sex.[1]*

[1] Rom. Solt. ii. 410, 413; Kausler, 684, 685; Ann. Hist. xiv. 507.

90. Vain attempt at negotiation.

While this bloody conflict was going on around Wola, Paskiewitch directed strong columns of attack against the village of Kruli Karnia, and soon the fire was general as far as the barrier of Jerusalem, close to Warsaw. The Polish generals, upon this, advanced in force, and drove back the enemy with great slaughter; but it was too late. The capture of Wola had decided the fate of the day, and Krukowieckski, who had never been beyond the second line, returned at three in the afternoon to the seat of government, declaring that all was lost, and that nothing remained but to surrender. He even made no attempt to hold the remainder of the lines, till time was gained for Ramorino to return, whose 20,000 men might still have restored the day. He demanded, and had during the night, a long and secret conference with Paskiewitch; but, after a considerable delay, it led to no result, as the Russian general insisted on an unconditional surrender. At one o'clock on the next day the battle was renewed, the Poles having retired at all points to their second line, while the Russians, with 190 guns in front, advanced in dense columns to the attack.[2] There

Sept. 7.
[2] Rom. Solt. ii. 424, 426; Kausler, 686, 690; Ann. Hist. xiv. 507; Paskiewitch's Desp. Sept. 8, 1831; Ann. Hist. xiv. 185, App.

* "Au milieu du feu je remarquai un soldat de la 5e légion, qui restait constamment appuyé sur le parapet, ne s'inquiétant nullement des obus et des boulets, encourageant ses camarades, gesticulant et parlant avec vivacité. Comme il était au premier rang, je ne pus d'abord apercevoir sa figure; il se retourna, et je reconnus en lui une belle fille de dix-huit ans: il n'y avait pas de bataillon ou escadron de l'armée où il n'y eut une ou plusieurs de ces héroïnes."—ROMAN SOLTYK, ii. 415, note. (An eyewitness.)

were still 32,000 regular troops and 4000 national guards in the town, and they were animated by the courage of despair. Everything announced a still more desperate conflict than had taken place on the preceding day.

91. Fall of Warsaw. Sept. 7.

The weight of the attack was directed against the faubourg of Wola and the bridge of Czysto, defended by two strong redoubts on one side, and three on the other. A tremendous fire was opened on the works by the Russian guns, which preceded their columns; but, notwithstanding this, the fire of the redoubts was so vigorous that the Muscovite columns of assault were shaken, and Uminski, by a flank charge, completed their defeat near the first of these points. The 20,000 men, absent under Ramorino, might then have saved Poland; and, as it was, the result was for some time doubtful. But towards four o'clock the Russian fire had established a superiority over that of the redoubts which defended the bridge of Czysto, and the corps of Pahlen and Krentz, the élite of the Russian army, was formed in columns of assault. At a signal given, these noble veterans rushed forward, with drums beating, colours flying, and amidst warlike cries, towards the intrenchments. A terrible fire, first of canister, then of grape, spread death among them as they came within range; but the assailants pushed resolutely on, and, notwithstanding an obstinate resistance on the part of the Poles, several of the intrenchments fell into their hands. It was the superior fire of artillery which mainly occasioned this success. Upon learning of this disaster, Krukowieckski, finding the resistance could no longer be prolonged, agreed to a surrender at discretion, on condition that the Polish army was permitted to retire to Plock. Next day the Russians entered in triumph at the northern gates, while the Polish troops, in the deepest dejection, wended their way through the southern.[1] Five thousand of their number had fallen; 4000 prisoners and 130 guns remained in the hands of

[1] Paskiewitch's Desp. Sept. 8, 1831; Ann. Hist. xiv. 188, 189; Rom. Solt. ii. 425, 431; Kausler, 689, 690.

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the conquerors, whose loss in these two bloody days, admitted by Paskiewitch to have been 5378 killed and wounded, was in reality nearly 20,000 men.

92. The remainder of the Polish troops take refuge in Austria and Prussia.

After the capitulation of Warsaw, Paskiewitch insisted that the army which had retired to Plock should submit to the will of the Emperor; but its chiefs disdained to surrender, and, in circumstances obviously desperate, insisted on continuing the contest. It was in vain: the death-blow had been given to Poland under the walls of Warsaw. Ramorino, whose absence had cost it so dear on the final struggle, retired towards the Upper Vistula, where he was closely followed by a large body of Russians, who summoned him to surrender. He indignantly refused, but in the night crossed the frontiers into the Austrian territory.

Sept. 17. Ryweki, who commanded another division of the Polish troops, hard pressed by the corps of Rosen and Doctoroff, was driven to the confines of the republic of Cracow, and crossed the frontier of Gallicia, where his troops were

Sept. 21. disarmed. The principal army under Malachowski, which had retreated from Warsaw, was raised in a few days by fugitives from various quarters to 27,000 men with 93 guns, besides the garrison of Modlin, to which it retired, which was 6000 more. But it was almost destitute of ammunition. The men, whose clothing was worn out, were without pay; magazines there were none to carry on the contest. The capitulation of Warsaw deprived them of hope, the last refuge of the destitute; dissensions broke out among the chiefs; Malachowski refused the supreme command, as he had been discredited by having signed the capitulation, and Rybinski was by a plurality elected general-in-chief. For a few days he continued the contest; but the forces which Paskie-

Oct. 5. witch directed against them were so great that the forces under him were obliged to cross the frontier and lay down their arms in the Prussian territory, to the number of 21,000. This terminated the war, after it had continued, with scarce any intermission, for eight months.[1]

[1] Rem. Solt. ii. 446, 479; Ann. Hist. xiv. 508, 509.

Short as this campaign had been, it had cost the Russians dear, and they had sustained more serious defeats than they had ever sustained from the arms of Napoleon. The Poles had delivered six pitched battles and above thirty combats, with an army never amounting in all to 80,000 men, and the resources only of four millions of people. No alliances or external aid of any kind had added to their strength; they stood alone to front the conquerors of Napoleon. The losses of the Russians during the war, brief as it was, had been immense. It appeared from an official statement, published by the Russian government to justify a subsequent levy of four in five hundred of the inhabitants, that in this short war they had lost 180,000 men,—an astonishing amount, indicating how much greater the losses in war are from disease and fatigue than battle; for certainly those who perished, or were disabled by the sword, were not a third of the number. In this statement the losses in the siege of Warsaw are set down at 30,680 men. The result is equally honourable to the courage and patriotism of the Poles, and characteristic of the perseverance and resources of the Russians; for never had they been more severely tried, or the scales of fortune hung more even in conflict with a foreign enemy.[1]

93. Results of the war to both parties.

[1] Ann. Hist. xiv. 509.

If the development of the resources of Russia during this memorable struggle, and the vigour and ability with which they were directed, were honourable to the capacity and firmness of the Emperor Nicholas, the same cannot be said of his subsequent conduct to the vanquished, which was characterised by all the stern resentment and implacable determination which, not less than vigour and capacity, distinguished that remarkable man. The noblest families in Warsaw were seized, and dragged into exile in Siberia; the oath forced upon the soldiers by the threat of death and the terror of the knout; and the sons of the patriotic families, torn from their mothers' arms, and sent off to distant military colonies as common soldiers, where

94. Conduct of Nicholas in Poland after the war, and in the cholera.

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numbers of them perished of fatigue and misery. Equally characteristic of the iron will of the Emperor was his conduct during the period when the cholera made fearful ravages in the Russian empire. The deaths in a few weeks in St Petersburg amounted to four thousand; and the people, ascribing it as usual to poison, assembled in tumultuous mobs, invaded the hospitals, and carried off the sick from their beds to their own houses, to save them, as they conceived, from destruction. No sooner did he hear of these disorders, than the Emperor repaired to the spot, boldly fronted the mutineers, and exclaimed with a loud voice, "Down on your knees, and ask pardon of God and your Czar for your sins." The people sunk with their faces on the ground, and the tumult was appeased.[1]

July 4.

[1] Marquis Custine, ii. 272; Ann. Hist. xiv. 511, 512.

95. Reflections on the fall of Poland.

The astonishing stand which Poland, with less than a fourth of its ancient territory and inhabitants, made without external aid against the whole strength of Russia in this memorable year, throws a clear and precious light on the causes of its previous decline and long-continued misfortunes. It had received from the hand of nature all the gifts which are required to make a nation great and powerful; a noble and fertile soil, ample navigable rivers, spacious harbours, a bold and ardent people, passionately attached to freedom. On the other hand, Russia possessed originally far fewer natural advantages. She had, before Peter the Great, no seaport towns, her territory was less fertile, her inhabitants, till they were swelled by foreign conquest, less numerous, and incomparably less brave and chivalrous. What was it which rendered the one constantly victorious over the other—which rendered Polish history, during five centuries, nothing but a series of misfortunes, casually interrupted by glory—Muscovite, of durable victories and acquisitions, never stopped by passing disaster? The reason is to be found in the excess of the very spirit which constituted the spring of Polish vitality, which caused them at times to do such great

things, at others to commit such enormous and unpardonable faults.

96. Excess of democracy in Poland ruined everything.

The spirit which animated Poland was not the regulated principle of Anglo-Saxon liberty, which has rendered England and America the admiration of the globe, but the wild excess of unbridled democracy. Equality, not subordination, was their passion: their stormy comitia, their *Liberum Veto*, their delegated representatives, prove it. Their idea of freedom was absence from all control, and, above all, *liberation from all taxes*. This is the first idea of liberty all over the world; unhappily the Poles never got beyond it. They clung to it to the very last, amidst all their misfortunes, till they were fairly swallowed up and partitioned by their former vassals. Russia, on the other hand, came in process of time to unite the lust of conquest and unity of feeling, which in every age have characterised Asia, to the steady policy, scientific acquisitions, so far as war is concerned, and far-seeing wisdom, of Europe. Thus Asia in its strength was brought up against Europe in its weakness; thence the conquest of the one by the other. And accordingly the first and only occasion when the balance really hung even between them, was when the resources of a fragment of ancient Poland had been drawn forth by foreign government, when foreign power had compelled its inhabitants to pay taxes, forced them to raise a regular army, and given consistency to their fiery squadrons.

Democracy has doubled the strength of Russia, and prevented the restoration of Poland.

As democracy had been the ruin of ancient Poland, and the cause of its dismemberment, so its excesses have been the barrier which, in recent times, have prevented its restoration. Every triumph of the republican spirit in Western Europe has been the signal for an increase the more to Russian power, a chance the less to Polish independence. Its partition in 1794 was unresisted by the Western powers, because France and England, from the consequence of the Revolution in the former country,

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instead of being united to withstand Eastern aggression, were engaged in deadly hostility with each other. The triumph of democracy in France, and the organisation of its resources in appalling strength by the genius of Napoleon, led to no other result but the lasting acquisition of Finland and Poland by the Czar. The Revolution of France in 1830 led first to the entire subjugation of Poland by Russia, and its incorporation with the dominions of the conquering power, and then to the closing of the Euxine against foreign vessels of war by the fatal treaty of 1833, which, as will appear in the sequel, converted its waters into a Russian lake; that of 1848 brought a hundred and sixty thousand Muscovites to the banks of the Danube, and opened through subdued Austria a path for the legions of the Czar to Constantinople. It would seem as if Russia, backed by the ices of the pole, and inaccessible from its vast extent, is the scourge perpetually held up by Providence to repress the excesses of vicious civilisation, and restrain men in free states within the bounds which reason and the lasting interests of freedom itself require.

98. Unity of the East is its strength, divisions of the West its weakness.

These facts are fraught with a mighty moral, and teach a lesson of the very last importance to the permanent interests of liberty and civilisation. This is, that Russia must be resisted by Europe, if the latter would preserve its religion, its civilisation, its independence; but it must be resisted by Europe in its strength, not Europe in its weakness. The nations of the West must go forth to combat the hordes of the East; but they must go forth in their established ranks, under their traditional leaders, and in their united strength, not with half their forces turned over, from the dread of revolutions, to the enemy. Democracy has tried its utmost strength against despotism, and failed in the struggle: no future age with that arm can hope to achieve what the genius of Napoleon and the fervour of 1830 and 1848 failed to effect. But this failure does not prove that Europe is unable to

contend with Russia, that freedom must succumb to despotism; it proves only that *divided* Europe cannot stand against *united* Russia, half the strength of liberty against the whole forces of despotism. Freedom has need of all its forces to resist the attack of fanatical zeal, and the lust of conquest led by regulated despotism aided by military skill. Had England been united to France in 1812, Russia would have been repelled to its deserts by the legions of Napoleon and Wellington: had the triumph of the Barricades and the Reform transports not paralysed Britain and Germany in 1831, the independence of Poland would have been re-established by the arms of Skrzynecki. The strength of the East lies in its indissoluble union under a single head; the weakness of the West, in its ceaseless divisions under many.

99. Restoration of Poland essential to independence of Europe.

In the very front rank of the great league of the Western powers, which can alone preserve Europe from Russian subjugation, must be placed THE RESTORATION OF POLAND. Such a measure would not be revolutionary; it would be conservative. Restoration is a work of justice, of which no government, how strong soever, need be ashamed: the principle of revolution is spoliation, not restitution. To restore Poland is not to introduce new ways, but to return to the old ones. In the courage and heroism of the Sarmatian race is to be found the real and the only effective barrier against the encroachments of the Muscovite: in their indelible feeling of nationality, the provision made by Providence for its resurrection, like the Phœnix from its ashes. Such a barrier is not to be found in Turkey. England and France may fight their own battle in the Crimea or on the Danube, but they will not find their real allies in the Ottomans. The Cross must defend itself; it is not to be defended by the Crescent. Europe committed a great sin in permitting the barrier of Poland to be swept away; it can be expiated only by aiding in its restoration. The extension of Austria to the mouth of

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the Danube, and the acquisition by it of Moldavia and Wallachia, under the burden of the stipulated payment to the Porte, is the obvious mode, without doing injustice to any one, of winning its consent to the cession of Gallicia. If Prussia casts in its lot with the Muscovites, it cannot complain if it undergoes the fate which it itself imposed on Saxony when its sovereign adhered to Napoleon in 1814. But to cement the league which is to achieve this mighty deliverance, the cause of independence must be severed from that of democracy; Poland must be restored by an effort of united Europe, not by arming one section of it against the other. Its partition was the sin of the sovereigns alone, and restitution must be made or retribution endured by the sovereigns, not the people.

END OF VOL. IV.

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